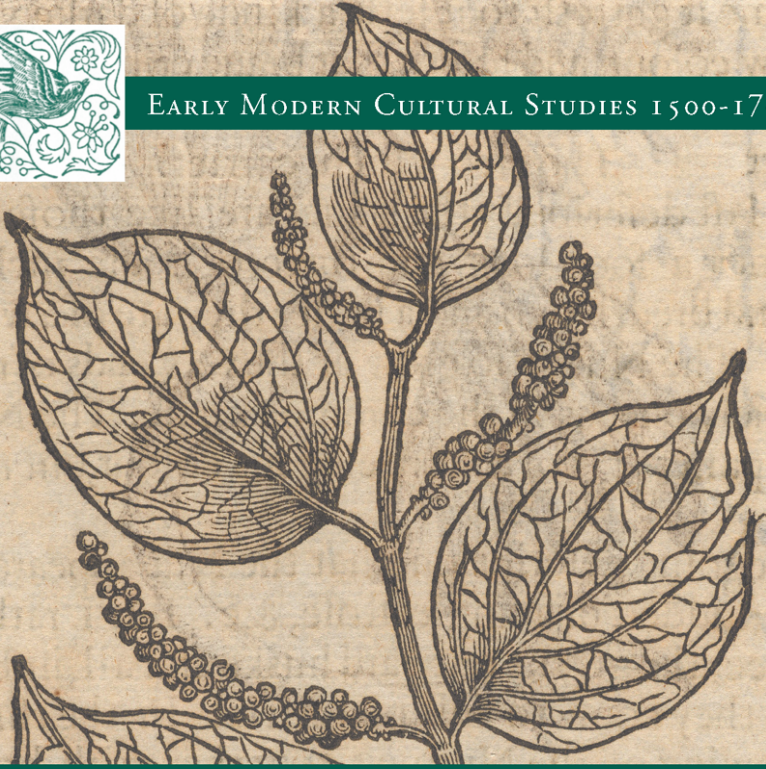


1 *Piper nigrum.*
Blacke Pepper.



EARLY MODERN CULTURAL STUDIES 1500-1700



EARLY MODERN ENGLAND AND ISLAMIC WORLDS

EDITED BY BERNADETTE ANDREA
AND LINDA MCJANNET



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EARLY MODERN ENGLAND
AND ISLAMIC WORLDS

Edited by

Bernadette Andrea
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CONTENTS

<i>Series Editors' Foreword</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<i>List of Contributors</i>	xi
<i>List of Illustrations</i>	xv
Introduction: Islamic Worlds in Early Modern English Literature <i>Bernadette Andrea and Linda McJannet</i>	1
1 From Maurice to Muhammad: Othello, Islam, and Baptism <i>Andrew Moran</i>	21
2 Islam, Race, and Political Legitimacy in Raleigh's <i>The Life and Death of Mahomet</i> <i>Dennis Austin Britton</i>	35
3 Persian Icons, Shi'a Imams: Liminal Figures and Hybrid Persian Identities on the English Stage <i>Javad Ghatta</i>	53
4 The Tartar King's Masque and Performances of Imperial Desire in Mary Wroth's <i>The Countess of Montgomery's Urania</i> <i>Bernadette Andrea</i>	73
5 Mariam Khan and the Legacy of Mughal Women in Early Modern Literature of India <i>Bindu Malieckal</i>	97
6 "by my owne experience or the Most probablest Relation off others": Manuscript Travel Writing and Peter Mundy's "Relation" of Constantinople (1617–20) <i>Philip S. Palmer</i>	123

7	Guy of Warwick, Godfrey of Bouillon, and Elizabethan Repertory <i>Annaliese F. Connolly</i>	139
8	“Now will I be a Turke”: Performing Ottoman Identity in Thomas Goffe’s <i>The Courageous Turk</i> <i>Joel Elliot Slotkin</i>	159
9	The Frontiers of <i>Twelfth Night</i> <i>Su Fang Ng</i>	173
10	“A Turk’s mustachio”: Anglo-Islamic Traffic and Exotic London in Ben Jonson’s <i>Every Man out of His Humour</i> and <i>Entertainment at Britain’s Burse</i> <i>Justin Kolb</i>	197
11	“Oranges and lemons say the bells of St. Clement’s”: Domesticating Eastern Commodities in London Comedies <i>Linda McJannet</i>	215
	<i>Bibliography</i>	239
	<i>Index</i>	261

SERIES EDITORS' FOREWORD

In the twenty-first century, literary criticism, literary theory, historiography, and cultural studies have become intimately interwoven, and the formerly distinct fields of literature, society, history, and culture no longer seem so discrete. The Palgrave Early Modern Cultural Studies Series encourages scholarship that crosses boundaries between disciplines, time periods, nations, and theoretical orientations. The series assumes that the early modern period was marked by incipient processes of transculturation brought about through exploration, trade, colonization, and the migration of texts and people. These phenomena set in motion the processes of globalization that remain in force today. The purpose of this series is to publish innovative scholarship that is attentive to the complexity of this early modern world and bold in the methods it employs for studying it.

As series editors, we welcome, for example, books that explore early modern texts and artifacts that bear the traces of transculturation and globalization and that explore Europe's relationship to the cultures of the Americas, of Europe, and of the Islamic world and native representations of those encounters. We are equally interested in books that provide new ways to understand the complex urban culture that produced the early modern public theater or that illuminate the material world of early modern Europe and the regimes of gender, religion, and politics that informed it. Elite culture or the practices of everyday life, the politics of state or of the domestic realm, the material book or the history of the emotions—all are of interest if pursued with an eye to novel ways of making sense of the strangeness and complexity of the early modern world.

JEAN HOWARD AND IVO KAMPS
Series Editors

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In general, we have followed Palgrave Macmillan house style in editing this collection. For proper names and other terms related to Islamic cultures, we followed the *IJMES* (*International Journal of Middle East Studies*) word list.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

COVER “*Piper nigrum*, Blacke Pepper,” from John Gerard, *The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plantes*, 2nd ed. (London, 1633), p. 1538. STC 11751 [F], Houghton Library, Harvard University

- | | | |
|------|--|-----|
| 7.1 | Guy fights the giant Amarant. From Samuel Rowland’s <i>The Famous History of Guy Earl of Warwick</i> (London, 1625), sig. M1v. STC 21378.7, Houghton Library, Harvard University | 144 |
| 11.1 | “ <i>Piper nigrum</i> , Blacke Pepper” from John Gerard, <i>The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plantes</i> , 2 nd ed. (London, 1633), p. 1538. STC 11751 [F], Houghton Library, Harvard University | 217 |
| 11.2 | “ <i>Zinziberis verior Icon</i> , The true figure of Ginger,” from John Gerard, <i>The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plantes</i> , 2 nd ed. (London, 1633), p. 61. STC 11751 [F], Houghton Library, Harvard University | 218 |

INTRODUCTION



ISLAMIC WORLDS IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE

*Bernadette Andrea and
Linda McJannet*

[I]t is time we realized there is only 'one world' even in history.

—Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience
and History in a World Civilization* (1974)

*I believe all texts to be worldly and circumstantial in (of course)
ways that vary from genre to genre, and from historical period to
historical period.*

—Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (1978)

*[T]he bitterest of all human conflicts spring from what [Freud]
called the 'narcissism of small differences': we hate and fear those
whom we most resemble, far more than those from whom we are
alien and remote.*

—Anthony Pagden, *Worlds at War: The 2,500-Year Struggle
Between East and West* (2008)¹

In a controversial, albeit popular tome, the eminent historian of early modern imperialisms, Anthony Pagden, pits “East” against “West” in a millennial conflict that he sees in the guise of a puritanical brand of Islam versus the personal freedoms touted by “bourgeois liberal democracy.”² The genealogy of today’s “East” that he constructs

runs from Ramzi Yousef (convicted for bombing the World Trade Center in 1993) and Osama bin Laden (who claimed responsibility for the devastating attack on September 11, 2001) back through Mawlana Abdullah Mawdudi and Sayyid Qutb (the early-twentieth-century architects of modern “political Islam”) and Ibn Taymiyah (the thirteenth-century Hanbali jurist lionized by this movement). The genealogy for the “West” is, predictably, Greco-Roman-Renaissance-Enlightenment, all leading to “us.” Pagden, though apparently “Whiggish” in orientation, thereby endorses the “clash of civilizations” propounded by the neoconservative political scientist Samuel Huntington.³

Clearly, this polarizing and polemical approach rejects Edward Said’s reiterated call for a “secular criticism” that is “life-enhancing and constitutively opposed to every form of tyranny, domination, and abuse” in favor of a Voltairian critique of religion that uses Islam for its particular target.⁴ To this end, Pagden isolates some of Said’s admittedly flawed articulations in *Orientalism* as his straw man.⁵ He consequently (and, it seems, tendentiously) ignores the rigorous scholarship that corrects Said’s historical misconceptions, such as Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton’s *Global Interests: Renaissance Art Between East and West* (2000) and related works; yet, this scholarship does not completely refuse the paradigm shift Said catalyzed for the study of Western European representations of “Islam.”⁶ Ultimately, Pagden disregards Marshall Hodgson’s proposal (and earlier Louis Massignon’s) for a “science of compassion” whereby

he [the scholarly observer] must never be satisfied to cease asking “but why?” until he has driven his understanding to the point where he has an immediate human grasp of what a given position meant, such that every nuance in the data is accounted for and withal, given the total of presuppositions and circumstances, he could feel himself doing the same.⁷

Our collection, which emphasizes literary negotiations in English during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with Islamicate cultures, political Islamdom, and Islam as a religion, to use Hodgson’s more nuanced terminology, seeks to challenge resurgent screeds of “East is East and West is West” by situating itself within this model, thereby critically engaging with Said’s contributions without falling into Pagden’s logical fallacy.⁸

Ironically, the East-West dualism that Pagden proposes depends on a monolithic view of each half of this equation. The deep rifts and

animosities characterizing different Western nations, religions, and ethnicities are glossed over, as are similar divisions in the East. To focus only on religious divisions, the history of civil, military, and ideological strife among Catholic, Protestant, and Byzantine Christians is no less a sign of the multiplicity of Western worldviews than those among Sunni, Shi'i, and Sufi Muslims. Even the assumed split between (Western) Christian and (Eastern) Islamic "worlds" cannot withstand historical scrutiny. During the early modern period, Eastern and central European territories (such as Greece, Romania, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Wallachia, and Moldavia) were home to Christians, Muslims, and Jews. Similarly, Istanbul (formerly Constantinople) was noted for its religious plurality, which included Christians and Jews along with Muslims, as were the regions of Mesopotamia, such as Baghdad, that passed between Ottoman and Safavid hands during this period. Nestorian Christians lived in Mughal India centuries before the Portuguese arrived and had lived side by side with Muslims, Hindus, and Sephardic Jews for generations.⁹ Hence, the plural in our title—"Islamic worlds." In contributing to the collection's overall goal of participating in the dismantling of totalizing oppositions between East and West, the subsequent essays highlight examples of hybridity and multiplicity across the Eurasian land mass and explore the different forms of engagement among subgroups, including foreign travel, translation, matrimony, trade, and literary representation.

This collection, then, situates itself within what might be called a "third wave" of historically, politically, and theoretically informed studies of early modern English relations with various Islamic worlds.¹⁰ Although it may seem a recent phenomenon, scholarly interest in Islam and early modern English literature goes back almost a hundred years to Louis Wann's "The Oriental in Elizabethan Drama" (1915) and Warner Grenelle Rice's "Turk, Moor, and Persian in English Literature" (1927).¹¹ In its exhaustive scope, Rice's unpublished dissertation anticipates Samuel C. Chew's *The Crescent and the Rose* (1937), which is usually seen as the pioneering discussion of the topic in modern times.¹² The dominant concerns of these early critics included historical accuracy, variously defined, and the aesthetic merits of literary works, narrowly conceived. Wann identified the historical sources used by the playwrights he studied and judged that, even though the sources themselves were often inaccurate, the dramatists achieved "a much more accurate and dispassionate portrayal of oriental character than we are wont to [assume]."¹³ By contrast, both Rice and Chew were more likely to see the representation

of Islamic characters (especially Moors) as instances of monstrous cultural stereotypes. In their view, the early modern writers' adherence to their sources doomed rather than redeemed their characters; indeed, the writers' interventions were seen as usually making matters worse.¹⁴ Rice argued that, as a result, Muslim characters are "dreadful beyond belief" and are therefore "failures"—artistically and perhaps ideologically, though this category was not explicit in his analysis.¹⁵ Chew likewise comments with mordant irony on the excess of prejudice and lack of artistic merit in these plays. After summarizing the denouement of Thomas Goffe's *The Courageous Turk* (first performed in 1618; published posthumously in 1632), he concludes: "[A]nd the tragedy comes to an end—much to the reader's relief."¹⁶ Similarly, having noted how the prefatory verses to Lodowick Carlell's *Osmond the Great Turk* (1567) stress the author's youth, Chew observes that the author "needed whatever excuse could be offered for him."¹⁷

Chew's identification and description of so many texts that deal with Islam—histories, travelogues, captivity narratives, court masques, civic pageants, and poetic allusions, as well as stage plays—is still a boon to scholars and interested readers. His critical assessment of individual works, however, became a mixed blessing. In covering so many texts, Chew devoted a paragraph or two to each, but for several decades his judgments seemed to be the final word. As Byron Porter Smith explained in 1939, in deference to "the material so ably handled in Professor Chew's book," he radically abbreviated his own discussion of Islamic themes in medieval and Renaissance literature and began instead with the age of Dryden.¹⁸ Also in apparent deference to Chew, even Orhan Burian, a Turkish scholar who had translated *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Timon of Athens*, and *As You Like It* in the mid-1940s, treated the drama only cursorily in his essay on Turkey and English Renaissance literature, focusing instead on histories and travel narratives.¹⁹ Burian's essay was important, however, since it introduced the possibility of ambivalence and conflicted reactions toward the Ottomans and other Eastern peoples on the part of English travelers and perhaps English readers as well.²⁰ During the 1960s and early 1970s, historians Norman Daniel, Richard William Southern, Brandon Beck, and others provided valuable analyses of European religious and other writings in order to trace the development of European images of Islam,²¹ but literary critics, such as Eldred Jones and Anthony Gerard Barthelemy, pursuing their research at the same time as the U.S. civil rights movement and the global anticolonial movements of the 1960s and 1970s, focused on Africa and the question of race rather than on religion or Islamic civilization.²² Once

Chew had more or less established the canon of English Renaissance works on Islam and lamented their shortcomings, the subject seemed to disappear from literary studies of the period.

The 1978 publication of literary critic Edward W. Said's *Orientalism* changed all that.²³ Said's provocative and sweeping analysis of the role of discursive constructions in Western Europe's colonial encroachments on Muslim lands from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries focused the attention of scholars in many fields once more upon the "Orient"—a word now permanently endowed with quotation marks, if used at all. While the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict was part of the motivation for Said's project, critical interest in Islam after *Orientalism* was intensified by a series of dramatic political events, including the Iranian revolution of 1979, the outbreak of Muslim-Christian strife in the Balkans in the 1990s, and the events of September 11, 2001, in New York. This combination turned the attention of literary critics from the New World and colonial activity in the Americas, a prominent subject in criticism of the 1980s and the early 1990s, back to various "Old Worlds," which were arguably more important to early modern English people and which had acquired new prominence and urgency for contemporary Westerners.²⁴

Said's work had other, more specific effects as well. It inspired scholars to resist totalizing fictions such as "the Oriental" and to search for more historically specific categories of analysis. Some argued that early modern English speakers used the terms "Moor" and "Turk" as synonyms for "Muslim," and thus they can and should be used in that way by modern scholars.²⁵ Others maintained that because many texts from the period do distinguish among Ottomans, Persians, and Moors, scholars need to attend to the representation of specific ethnicities and cultures.²⁶ In addition, to some scholars early modern representations of Muslims seemed almost clichéd examples of the demonization of "the other" and thus were ripe for analysis in terms of Said's revisionist East-West binary, which ironically is reproduced by Pagden in his critique of Said.

The blanket application of Said's thesis to the early modern period, however, was eventually challenged by literary critics who insisted that the assumption of cultural, military, and technological superiority at the root of orientalism did not—and could not—apply to early modern England in relation to the Muslims of North Africa, the Levant, or India.²⁷ The English were belated players on the world stage, who necessarily approached Ottoman, Moroccan, Mughal, and other Islamic states as supplicants or "mimic-men," not as potential colonizers.²⁸ In a collection entitled *Center or Margin* edited

by Lena Cowen Orlin, Peter Stallybrass likewise demonstrates that, when viewed from the East, England was definitely “marginal.”²⁹ As Matthew Dimmock summarizes, some critics were “so entangled in Said’s work that they often end[ed] up reasserting the basic divisions of his thesis in the process of denying them.”³⁰ For instance, despite his objections to the application of Said’s thesis about orientalism to the early modern period, Matar still argued that dramatic literature was largely responsible for creating anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim stereotypes among the English. In his view, “It was plays, masques, pageants, and other similar sources that developed in British culture the discourse about Muslim Otherness. . . . Eleazer [from *Lust’s Dominion*] and [Shakespeare’s] Othello bec[a]me the defining literary representation of the ‘Moor,’ and Bajazeth, Ithamore and Amureth [from plays such as Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*] of the ‘Turk’.”³¹ However, critics drawing on Matar’s groundbreaking work have since demonstrated that the images of Muslims they presented were far more nuanced, fluid, and ambivalent than previously reported, a project in which this collection participates.³²

Having faulted the East-West binary shared by Said and Pagden as anachronistic and reductive, literary critics sought new models for understanding early modern encounters, real and imagined, with “Islam” as a cultural, social, and religious phenomena. Ania Loomba, for instance, has stressed cultural hybridity and permeability rather than the psychological opposition of self and other.³³ Jonathan Burton, Bernadette Andrea, and Natalie Zemon Davis have engaged the writings and self-representations of hybrid figures like Leo Africanus, an Andalusian-cum-Moroccan convert to Christianity (and perhaps back again to Islam).³⁴ Burton adds the term “trafficking” to emphasize that cultural production occurs in “an ‘entrepôt’ from which [conflicting] forces invariably come away changed.”³⁵ Lisa Jardine, Jerry Brotton, and Gerald MacLean likewise emphasized the dynamism of East-West cultural exchanges and the related circulation of commodities and imperial iconography.³⁶ A recent collection entitled *Global Traffic*, edited by Barbara Sebek and Stephen Deng, assesses the circulation of more ordinary commodities, tracing the influence of East-West trade on ways of knowing, domestic life, and institutional initiatives.³⁷ Burton, among others, has lamented the one-sidedness of the archives upon which most anglophone scholars depend (namely Western Christian sources) and argued for a “transcultural” mode of analysis that would include “wherever possible, translated accounts of Ottoman and North African Muslim writers” and “instances of Muslim self-representation as well as Muslim

representations of the West.”³⁸ Matar’s translation of the accounts of Arabic travelers in Europe makes an important contribution in this regard,³⁹ and Linda McJannet’s study of Latin translations of Byzantine, Arabic, and Turkish histories traces their influence on the versions of the Tamburlaine story available to English readers and writers.⁴⁰

Offering a synoptic view of these trends in a recent review essay, Gerald MacLean underlines the problematic and contested nature of the most basic terms in the field—“Europe,” “Christendom,” “Empire,” “East,” and “West”—and asserts the need to dismantle what he views as the too-long perpetuated myth of the “clash of civilizations.”⁴¹ Like Burton, MacLean challenges scholars to move beyond “one-way” analysis. As a result of Said’s critique, he argues, “younger scholars . . . have felt free to dismiss the important historical studies produced by skilled . . . orientalists.”⁴² He urges those in the field to “take serious heed of works by those who, skilled in the necessary languages, are directly engaged in original archival study” and thereby to inform themselves more fully about the Muslim peoples and cultures being represented in English literary works.⁴³ This is a serious challenge, since it essentially asks the critic to master at least two fields: early modern English literature and the various manifestations of “Islam” it presumed to represent. Others have used the term “micro-history” to suggest that criticism of early modern English representations must be grounded in the multiple histories it seeks to engage, drawing on the traces of subaltern (including Muslim) agency in western sources as well as delving into more fully preserved archival records on a comparative basis.⁴⁴

The essays in this collection accordingly build on this literary history of early modern English relations with various “Islamic worlds” by working from, and at the same time complicating, the critique initiated by Said’s polemical intervention. Several examine Islamic locales other than North Africa and the Ottoman Empire, areas that have predominated in literary critical studies to date. Su Fang Ng in “The Frontiers of *Twelfth Night*,” takes a fresh look at the meaning of Illyria, an Adriatic coastal region historically contested by Christian and Ottoman forces. She calls attention to the many Islamic references in the play (Caesario as “eunuch” and Malvolio as “renegade”) and highlights the significance of the pirates and go-betweens as figures who typically thrive in liminal lands. She thus awakens our sense of both the religious and the geopolitical allusions to Islam and the Ottoman subjects in the play. In “Islam, Race, and Political Legitimacy in Raleigh’s *The Life and Death of Mahomet*,”

Dennis Austin Britton focuses on a Moorish king of Spain featured in Raleigh's translation of Miguel de Luna's 1603 *Historia verdadera del rey don Rodrigo*. Britton foregrounds the admiring portrait of Almanzor, an early Moorish king of Spain, noting that Raleigh systematically "demonizes" the Spaniards, not the Moors. At the same time, Raleigh attempts "to strike a careful balance between validating the Moorish conquest and praising Almanzor, and making it clear that Islam is a false religion." Other authors focus on figures associated with Mughal India (Bindu Malieckal), Central Asia (Bernadette Andrea), and Persia (Javad Ghatta).

In addition to expanding our awareness of the geographic multiplicity of the Islamic worlds the English encountered in the early modern period, two of these essays exemplify micro-history, as they painstakingly describe the experience of a single historical figure or document the religious practices of a particular historical-cultural moment. In "Mariam Khan and the Legacy of Mughal Women in Early Modern Literature of India," Bindu Malieckal reconstructs the life of Begum Mariam Khan and her influence on seventeenth-century English literature. As the wife (sequentially) of two English East India Company merchants (Gabriel Towerson and William Hawkins), Mariam is "possibly the first Indian woman to officially immigrate to England." However, as Malieckal points out, this "Indian" woman was herself an emblem of the plurality of Mughal India: she was a descendant of well-positioned Armenians at Jahangir's court and an Eastern Christian. Moreover, Mariam Khan came from a culture in which highborn women (especially members of the Muslim elite) held considerable wealth and political influence. As Malieckal shows, traces of Mariam and other women from the region may be seen in Yasabinda in Dryden's *Amboyna* and in *Aurang-Zebe*.

Describing a particular stage in the Muslim conversion of Persia as a dynastic state, rather than focusing on individuals between worlds, Javad Ghatta's "'Persian Icons, Shi'a Imams: Liminal Figures and Hybrid Persian Identities on the English Stage'" demonstrates that understanding a particular Islamic religiocultural context can significantly alter our perception of its literary representation. Drawing on sources in Farsi, Ghatta establishes the survival of ancient Zoroastrian religious observances and symbols in Safavid Persia, despite its official conversion to Shi'i Islam in the sixteenth century. He demonstrates that elements in *The Three English Brothers* previously derided as either ignorantly ahistorical or deliberately libelous have a basis in syncretic Safavid practices. Since Ghatta was revising this essay in Isfahan at the time of the disputed Iranian election in June 2009, his

argument about conflicted and multiple Persianate identities seems especially poignant and relevant.

Two essays focus on manuscript sources, as well as print, and add a private travel book and a nondramatic romance to the generic scope of the collection. Philip Palmer, in “‘by mine owne experience or the Most probablest Relation off others’: Traveling Writing and Peter Mundy’s Manuscript ‘Relation’ of Constantinople (1617–20),” explores the “hybridity and multiplicity” of the genre of the manuscript travel book. A combination of firsthand observations, retrospective reconstructions, authorial illustrations, and borrowings from printed sources, Mundy’s large folio volume (510 leaves) sheds light on the textual practices associated with travel literature and documents how he forms “an intercultural bond in both his imagination and memory.” Bernadette Andrea considers the manuscript continuation of Mary Wroth’s *The Countesse of Montgomeries Urania*, which offers one of the most sustained treatments of Central Asians in the period, including a Tartar king and a Tartar/Persian princess. The Tartar king is represented as a hybrid figure, Asian yet Christian, “sunn-burnt” but with “hands soe white.” As such, he both “facilitates and unsettles” the romance plot as it moves toward a wishful, all-encompassing Christian hegemony. By the end, Andrea observes, this “brave Tartarian” (in Wroth’s words) is relegated to its margins, but he has also become an integral member of an imperialist dynasty that seeks to encompass East and West.

In addition to the genres discussed so far (history, biography, travelogue, and romance), several authors focus on drama from a variety of angles. Andrew Moran, “From Maurice to Mohammad: Othello, Islam, and Baptism,” considers the multiple religious contexts that hover in the background of Shakespeare’s resonant depiction of the tragic Moor. He demonstrates Othello’s relation not only to stereotyped Christian views of the Prophet Muhammad, but also to the black magus Balthazar and St. Maurice, a martyr whose name derives from *mauron*, the Greek word for black. By making this connection, Moran is able to show how Othello migrates from the latter two to the former in the course of the play, losing faith in the Catholic view of the sacrament of baptism, with its promise of cleansing from the “stain” of sin, and adopting a more pessimistic Protestant view of human sinfulness. Annaliese Connolly’s essay, “Guy of Warwick, Godfrey of Bouillon and Elizabethan Repertory,” considers the political and theatrical contexts of two noncanonical dramatic romances: *The Tragical History, Admirable Atchievements and various events of Guy earl of Warwick* and Thomas Heywood’s *The Four Prentices of*

London. By analyzing the conflation of Saracen and Turkish elements in *The Tragical History*, she argues that the play's affinity with the style and spectacle of *Tamburlaine*, along with the author's substitution of a sultan with a Turkish-sounding name ("Shamurath") for the "Saracen giant" in the play's sources, suggests its participation in a "commercial strategy" to prolong the stage life of plays in the company's repertory. In addition, she demonstrates the "multivalency" of the Muslim characters, whose portrayals sometimes engage contemporary religious and political events. Joel Elliot Slotkin's essay, "'Now will I be a Turke': Performing Ottoman Identity in Thomas Goffe's *The Courageous Turk*," revisits an academic drama previously considered an example of essentialist anti-Turk and anti-Muslim bias. Slotkin, however, notes the degree to which the sultan's violent actions are complicated by the pressure of heroic and Stoic ideals readily recognizable to an English audience and by the stereotypical image of "the Turk" in English culture and his own. As a result, Amurath's bloody deeds and rhetoric depict a conflicted effort to live up to a socially constructed "ideal" rather than offer evidence of an innately violent or evil character, personal or national.

The last two essays in the collection consider dramatic representations of East-West trade, arguing that Eastern commodities became part of London life and essential to Londoners' sense of themselves as citizens of the world. In "'A Turk's mustaschio': Anglo-Islamic Traffic and Exotic London in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour* and *Entertainment at Britain's Burse*," Justin Kolb examines "the fear of turning Turk prompted by Anglo-Islamic exchange, and the identity anxiety produced by life in the consumer economy of London." In Jonson's comedy and civic pageant, however, the emphasis is less on the external threat to a coherent Christian identity and more on "the opportunities for consumption, self-fashioning, and self-delusion" offered by traffic with the Islamic East. *Britain's Burse* secularizes the sultan and the pirate as paragons and partners, respectively, in England's trade with the East; in *Every Man Out*, Jonson presents England flush with exotic goods, in which "the real derangements of soul are those Englishmen inflict on themselves." Linda McJannet's "'Oranges and lemons say the bells of St. Clement's': Domesticating Eastern Commodities in London Comedies" likewise focuses on the consumption of imports from Islamic regions—in this case silks and spices. Long enjoyed by aristocrats but only newly available to middle- and even lower-class Londoners, these luxury commodities are surprisingly integrated into both the conflicts and celebrations of urban life. While silks remained controversial symbols of status or

social aspiration, spices appear to have been thoroughly domesticated, to the extent that particular spiced foods are identified with—even emblematic of—particular London neighborhoods.

The “Islamic worlds” explored in this collection therefore exemplify Said’s most enduring contribution to our understanding of orientalism as “a detailed logic governed not simply by empirical reality but by a battery of desires, repressions, investments, and projections.”⁴⁵ This is the West representing itself through the East, but in an era when Western European sovereigns and their subjects (diplomats, merchants, missionaries, and would-be tourists) remained supplicants to the more powerful empires of the Ottomans, the Safavids, and the Mughals. Hence, this representation cannot be of “a sovereign Western conscience”; rather, it consists of uncertain negotiations between “self” and “other” and the possibilities for hybrid subject positions that ensue.⁴⁶ In the late eighteenth century, the consolidated realm of Great Britain would make imperialistic claims to this East, but the earlier literatures and histories these essays examine show how mixing, multiplicity, and even more subversive negotiations of English, and more broadly British, “selfhood” could emerge from this early modern engagement with “Islam” in all its complexity.

NOTES

1. Epigraphs are from Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), I.58; Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (1978; New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 23; Anthony Pagden, *Worlds at War: The 2,500-Year Struggle Between East and West* (New York: Random House, 2008), xiv–xv.
2. Pagden, *Worlds at War*, 526–7. Pagden’s groundbreaking studies on Western imperialism include *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France c. 1500–c. 1800* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1995), *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1994), and *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). See also Pagden, *Peoples and Empires: A Short History of European Migration, Exploration, and Conquest from Greece to the Present* (New York: Modern Library, 2001), which anticipates his polemic in *Worlds at War*.
3. Dominic Sandbrook, “A Conflict Deeper than Rape and Pillage,” *The Daily Telegraph* March 22, 2008, describes Pagden’s *Worlds at War* as “a strikingly Whiggish book.” Richard W. Bulliet, a professor

of history at Columbia University and author of *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), in “A One-Man Crusade,” *The Washington Post* December 9, 2008, more bluntly states that Pagden’s book “describes...his own triumphalist construction of European ideology.” Amy Chua, “Divided and Conquered,” *The New York Times* March 23, 2008, summarizes: “It’s a good bet that ‘Worlds at War’ will appeal more to admirers of Samuel Huntington’s thesis about the clash of civilizations, which Pagden calls ‘a crude but useful phrase,’ than to fans of Edward Said’s book ‘Orientalism.’” Huntington, a former professor of government at Harvard University who initially gained notoriety as a presidential advisor during the U.S. war against Vietnam, popularized this thesis as an explanation for current global conflicts, which he conceptualizes as “the West versus the Rest” with specific reference to the Islamic world. See Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* (1993), republished in *The Clash of Civilizations?: The Debate* (New York: Foreign Affairs, 1996), 1–25. Huntington reiterates his anti-Islamic stance in *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Free Press, 2002), 209–18. For a survey of initial challenges to Huntington’s thesis, see Engin I. Erdem, “‘The Clash of Civilizations’: Revisited after September 11,” *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* 1.2 (2002), <http://www.alternativesjournal.net/volume1/number2/erdem.htm>, accessed June 4, 2010. While we wholeheartedly endorse the critique of “West” and “East” as totalizing concepts, in the absence of a more satisfactory vocabulary with which to discuss complex cultural and geographic entities, we will hereafter use the capitalized terms with implicit quotation marks in order to avoid confusion with the more literal meanings of “east” and “west.”

4. For his articulation of “secular criticism,” see Edward W. Said, *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983), 29. Said develops this model throughout his oeuvre, with his late essay, “The Clash of Definitions,” in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003), 569–90, specifically addressing Huntington’s “clash of civilizations” thesis. Pagden cites Said’s *Orientalism* dismissively once (563n8), and then provides all other references to Said via tendentious secondary sources (563n9, 572n3) and internal cross-references (570n66). For more thoughtful reassessments of *Orientalism*, including Said’s throughout his career, see Alexander Lyon Macfie, ed., *Orientalism: A Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).
5. For a similarly tendentious analysis, see Robert Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and Its Discontents* (Woodstock, New

- York: The Overlook Press, 2006). For a balanced response, see Lawrence Rosen, "Orientalism Revisited: Edward Said's Unfinished Critique," *Boston Review* 32.1 (2007): 31–2.
6. Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton, *Global Interests: Renaissance Art between East and West* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2000); see also Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York: Doubleday, 1996); Brotton, *Trading Territories: Mapping the Early Modern World* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997; Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1998); and Brotton, *The Renaissance Bazaar: From the Silk Road to Michelangelo* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Other studies focusing on Islam and continental Europe that relate to early modern English discourses during the Renaissance/early modern period include Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), and Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008). More focused studies include Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558–1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), and *Britain and Barbary, 1589–1689* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), from the perspective of literary criticism and history, and Daniel Goffman, *Britons in the Ottoman Empire, 1642–1660* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998) and *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), from the perspective of an Ottomanist and historian. Also relevant are Barbara Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire: The New World, Islam, and European Identities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Bernadette Andrea, *Women and Islam in Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), and Benedict Robinson, *Islam and Early Modern English Literature: The Politics of Romance from Spenser to Milton* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
 7. Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, I.379n6. For an assessment of Hodgson's approach, see Edmund Burke, III, "Conclusion: Islamic History as World History: Marshall G. S. Hodgson and *The Venture of Islam*," in *Rethinking World History: Essays on Europe, Islam, and World History*, by Hodgson; ed. Burke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 301–28. See also Louis Massignon's four-volume magnum opus, *La passion de Husayn Mansur Hallaj: Martyr mystique de l'Islam exécuté à Bagdad le mars 26 922 [CE]* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), translated in an abridged edition as *Hallaj: Mystic and Martyr*, trans. and ed. Herbert Mason (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994).

8. Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, I: 57–60. See also Gerald MacLean's discussion of terminology in his introduction to *Britain and the Muslim World: Historical Perspectives*, ed. MacLean (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 1–9.
 "East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet" is the opening line of Rudyard Kipling's "The Ballad of East and West" (1895); see Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1994), 132–62. For an exemplary use of Said's *Culture and Imperialism* to complicate the anachronistic claims in *Orientalism*, see John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).
9. See Bindu Malieckal's astute description and history of this multi-ethnic Mappila community and its role in the spice trade, "Muslims, Matriline, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: European Encounters with the Mappilas of Malabar, India," *The Muslim World* 95.2 (2005): 297–320.
10. For a related literary history, see Linda McJannet, "Islam and English Drama: A Critical History," *Early Theatre: A Journal Associated with the Records of Early English Drama* 12.2 (2009): 183–93, on which this section is based.
11. Louis Wann, "The Oriental in Elizabethan Drama," *Modern Philology* 12 (1915): 163–87, and Warner Grenelle Rice, "Turk, Moor, and Persian in English Literature from 1550–1660 with Particular Reference to the Drama," unpublished PhD diss. (Harvard University, 1927). Rice also published on stage plays, "The Sources of Massinger's *The Renegado*," *Philological Quarterly* 11 (1932): 65–75, and on travel narratives, "Early English Travellers to Greece and the Levant," *Essays and Studies in English and Comparative Literature* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1933), 205–60.
12. Samuel C. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England during the Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937; rpt. New York: Octagon Books, 1965).
13. Wann, "The Oriental in Elizabethan Drama," 182.
14. For example, Chew alleges that compared to the historical sources, Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* diminishes the stature and character of the Turkish sultan Bajazeth (472). For a contrary view, see Linda McJannet, *The Sultan Speaks: Dialogue in English Plays and Histories about the Ottoman Turks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 72–81.
15. Rice, "Turk, Moor, and Persian," 443.
16. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose*, 488.
17. *Ibid.*, 489.
18. Byron Porter Smith, *Islam in English Literature* (Beirut, Lebanon: The American Press, 1939; rpt. New York: Caravan, 1977), vii.

19. Orhan Burian, "Interest of the English in Turkey as Reflected in English Literature of the Renaissance," *Oriens* 5 (1952): 208–29.
20. According to Burian, both learned historians and travelers tended to portray the Ottomans as (in William Painter's words) "that horrible termagant, and persecutor of christyans," but once the traveler sets foot on their land, he half forgets his animosity and becomes interested and excited by what is strange and different in this people. Their manners, customs, the setting of their lives appeal to his fancy" (Ibid., 228).
21. Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1960), and R. W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1962) focus on medieval religious writers. Brandon Beck, *From the Rising of the Sun: English Images of the Ottoman Empire to 1715* (New York: P. Lang, 1987) traces the image of the Ottomans in a variety of genres (translations of continental histories, travelers' accounts, and so on), but he merely lists the most prominent plays about the Turks in a brief paragraph (39).
22. Eldred Jones, *Othello's Countrymen: The African in English Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965) and *The Elizabethan Image of Africa* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1971); Anthony Gerard Barthelemy, *Black Face, Maligned Race: The Representation of Blacks in English Drama from Shakespeare to Southerne* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987). Jack D'Amico, *The Moor in English Renaissance Drama* (Tampa: University of Florida Press, 1991), was one of the first to focus on Moors in the context of Islam as well as race. Many other important studies on "race" in the English Renaissance have been published in the wake of these groundbreaking studies: most recently, Ania Loomba and Jonathan Burton, *Race in Early Modern England: A Documentary Companion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
23. The twenty-fifth anniversary edition—reprinted by Vintage Books in 2003—includes the original text, along with Said's 1994 "Afterword" (329–52) and his 2003 "Preface" (xv–xxx). This preface, dated May, was one of the last pieces he published prior to his death the following September.
24. See John Michael Archer, *Old Worlds: Egypt, Southwest Asia, India, and Russia in Early Modern English Writing* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001), and Daniel J. Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theatre and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), especially Ivo Kamps's Introduction, xii–xiv. Vitkus has edited two volumes that have been crucial for expanding interest in this field: *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000) and *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives*

- from *Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001). The latter includes an introduction by Nabil Matar subtitled, "England and Mediterranean Captivity, 1577–1704" (1–52). Other notable anthologies include Kenneth Parker, ed., *Early Modern Tales of Orient: A Critical Anthology* (London: Routledge, 1999); Ros Ballaster, ed., *Fables of the East: Selected Tales, 1662–1785* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); and Michael H. Fisher, ed., *Visions of Mughal India: An Anthology of European Travel Writing* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). For a critical edition of early modern English women's plays with Islamic themes, see Bernadette Andrea, *English Women Staging Islam, 1696–1707* (Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies/University of Toronto, forthcoming), which focuses on Delarivier Manley and Mary Pix.
25. For a defense of the term "Turkish plays" to cover a variety of Islamic settings and characters, see Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579–1624* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), 15. Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays*, implicitly uses "Turk" in this way when he lists plays that feature Moroccans and Spanish Moors as "Turk plays" (2–3). Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576–1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), likewise argues that terms like "Turk," "Moor," and "Indian" were "ubiquitous" and only vaguely distinguished from one another in the period (15).
 26. For a nonexhaustive list, in addition to works cited earlier, important studies of early modern English representations of Mughals include Ania Loomba, "Of Gifts, Ambassadors, and Copy-Cats: Diplomacy, Exchange, and Difference in Early Modern India," in *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture: Mediation, Transmission, and Traffic, 1550–1700* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2009), 41–76; Pompa Banerjee, *Burning Women: Widows, Witches, and Early Modern European Travelers in India* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Shankar Raman, *Framing "India": The Colonial Imaginary in Early Modern Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002); and Jyotsna G. Singh, *Colonial Narratives/Cultural Dialogues: Discoveries of India in the Language of Colonialism* (New York: Routledge, 1996). On Persianate themes in early modern English literature, see Linda McJannet, "'Bringing in a Persian,'" *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 12 (1999): 236–67, and "Pirates, Merchants, and Kings: Oriental Motifs in English Court and Civic Entertainments, 1510–1659," in *The Mysterious and Foreign in Early Modern England*, ed. Helen Ostovich, Mary Silcox, and Graham Roebuck (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 249–65. See also Bernadette Andrea, "Lady Sherley: The 'First' Persian in England?" *The Muslim World* 95.2 (2005): 279–95; "Persia, Tartaria, and Pamphilia: Ideas of Asia in Mary Wroth's

- The Countess of Montgomery's Urania, Part II,*" in *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*, eds. Walter S. H. Lim and Debra Johanyak (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 23–50; and "Elizabeth I and Persian Exchanges," in *The Foreign Relations of Elizabeth I*, ed. Charles Beem (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), 169–99.
27. For critiques by early modernists of Said's anachronisms, see note 6, as well as Linda McJannet, "Mapping the Ottomans on the Renaissance Stage," *Journal of Theatre and Drama* 2 (1996), 9–34; Bernadette Andrea, "Columbus in Istanbul: Ottoman Mappings of the 'New World,'" *Genre: Forms of Discourse and Culture* 30 (1997): 135–65; and Gerald MacLean, "Ottomanism before Orientalism? Bishop Henry King Praises Henry Blount, Passenger," *Travel Knowledge: European "Discoveries" in the Early Modern Period*, eds. Ivo Kamps and Jyostna G. Singh (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 85–96. Other important works on this topic by MacLean include *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580–1720* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) and *Re-orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005). See also his forthcoming book with Nabil Matar, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558–1713* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
 28. Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 9, who draws this term from postcolonial critic Homi Bhabha (*Ibid.*, 2, 12–13, 30).
 29. Peter Stallybrass, "Marginal England: The View from Aleppo," in *Margin or Center: Revisions of the English Renaissance in Honor of Leeds Barroll*, ed. Lena Cowen Orlin (Selingsgrove, Pennsylvania: Susquehanna University Press, 2006), 27–39. Patricia Parker's "Barbers, Infidels, and Renegades: *Antony and Cleopatra*," which explores the play's Islamic subtexts, also appears in this volume (54–89).
 30. Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 6. See also Dimmock's critical edition of William Percy's *Mahomet and his Heaven* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006). For an important work that focuses on later seventeenth-century dramatic works, see Matthew Birchwood, *Staging Islam in England: Drama and Culture, 1640–1685* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007). Birchwood and Dimmock edited the collection *Cultural Encounters between East and West, 1453–1699* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2005); with Andrew Hadfield, Dimmock edited the collection *The Religions of the Book: Christian Perceptions, 1400–1660* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
 31. Matar, *Turks Moors, and Englishmen*, 13.
 32. See Emily Bartels, "Othello and Africa: Postcolonialism Reconsidered," *William and Mary Quarterly* 54 (1997), 45–64. Bartels extends this

- analysis of the fluidity of attitudes in *Speaking of the Moor: From Alcazar to Othello* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).
33. Ania Loomba, "‘Delicious Traffick’: Alterity and Exchange on Early Modern Stages," *Shakespeare Survey* 52 (1999): 201–14.
 34. Jonathan Burton, "‘A most wily bird’: Leo Africanus, *Othello*, and the Trafficking in Difference," in *Post-Colonial Shakespeares*, eds. Ania Loomba and Martin Orkin (London: Routledge, 1998), 43–63; Bernadette Andrea, "Assimilation or Dissimulation?: Leo Africanus’s *Geographical Historie of Africa* and the Parable of Amphibia," *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 32.3 (2001): 7–29, and "The Ghost of Leo Africanus from the English to the Irish Renaissance," in *Postcolonial Moves: Medieval through Modern*, eds. Patricia Clare Ingham and Michelle R. Warren (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 195–215; Natalie Zemon Davis, *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim between Two Worlds* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006).
 35. Burton, *Traffic and Turning*, 15. See also Jonathan Burton, "Emplotting the Early Modern Mediterranean," in *Remapping the Mediterranean World in Early Modern English Writing*, ed. Goran V. Stanivukovic (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 21–40.
 36. See notes 6 and 27.
 37. Barbara Sebek and Stephen Deng, eds., *Global Traffic: Discourses and Practices of Trade in English Literature and Culture from 1550 to 1700* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2008). See also Jyotsna G. Singh, ed., *A Companion to the Global Renaissance: English Literature and Culture in the Era of Expansion* (Malden, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).
 38. Burton, *Traffic and Turning*, 14. Burton cites Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna G. Singh’s similar call for retrieving "the voices of indigenous people" in order to understand the dynamics of "transculturation" (*Travel Knowledge* 14), but he notes that they had only limited success in doing so (*Traffic and Turning* 260n11).
 39. Nabil Matar, *In the Lands of the Christians: Arabic Travel Writing in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003) and *Europe through Arab Eyes, 1578–1727* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).
 40. McJannet, "‘History Written by the Enemy’: Eastern Sources about the Ottomans on the Continent and in England," *English Literary Renaissance* 36.3 (2006): 396–429 and *The Sultan Speaks*, 91–117.
 41. Gerald MacLean, "When West Looks East: Some Recent Studies in Early Modern Muslim Cultures," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 7.1 (2007): 96–112.
 42. Ibid., 100–101. Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge*, notes that "[t]he word ‘Orientalist,’ in the sense of one versed in Oriental languages and literatures, entered the English language as early as 1779" (159).

43. MacLean, "When West Looks East," 98.
44. For instance, Matar, Introduction to *Europe Through Arab Eyes*, 19–20, 26–7, who cites Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero, eds., *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe*, trans. Eren Branch (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991). See also Bernadette Andrea, "The Tartar Girl, The Persian Princess, and Early Modern English Women's Authorship from Elizabeth I to Mary Wroth," in *Women Writing Back/Writing Women Back: Transnational Perspectives from the Late Middle Ages to the Dawn of the Modern Era*, eds. Anke Gilleir, Alicia C. Montoya, and Suzan van Dijk (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2010): 257–81.
45. Said, *Orientalism*, 8.
46. Ibid.

CHAPTER 1



FROM MAURICE TO MUHAMMAD: OTHELLO, ISLAM, AND BAPTISM

Andrew Moran

Othello is usually referred to as one of Shakespeare's "Venetian" plays, but maybe we should speak of it as the "Cyprus" play. Not only are the last four acts set there, but so, too, are a number of classical myths to which the play alludes. Othello, who believes that "a horned man's a monster, and a beast" (4.1.62), frightens the waking Desdemona with his own appearance (5.2.37–45) as he prepares for his "sacrifice" (5.2.65) on the altar of their bed.¹ He does this on the island where monstrous men become beasts. Ovid tells of a race of horned men who offer human victims on their altars, in punishment for which "wicked sacrifice" Venus transforms them into "boystrous Bulles with grim and cruell looke" (10.235–53).² Venice's island had once been Venus's, where she, *Kyprogenecia* ("Cyprus-born"), *Philommedea* ("Genitals-lover"), had emerged from the foamy residue of Uranus's testicles, tossed into the sea after his castration by Kronos.³ Thus, there is the irony of an aging bridegroom, who admits to little interest in sex (1.3.261–66), having his honeymoon in Cyprus. The ersatz consummation, his lugubrious suicide when he turns his sword on himself and finally "dies," spilling on the bed a mixture of tears and blood, may also refer back to classical mythology, to Ovid's story of the tree thought to take its name from the island. Cyparissus, after accidentally killing a beloved deer, mourned ceaselessly so that "through weeping overmuch his blood was drayned quyght" until he was transformed into the cypress tree (10.142). The cypress, then,

became a symbol of mourning and death because its sap is reminiscent of tears and its hard wood suitable for coffins.

Cyprus is itself a coffin. Shakespeare's audience would have likely known, especially after the recent publication of Richard Knolles's *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603), that the Venetians are doomed, and so the mythological allusions call attention to what, from a Christian perspective, would have been one of the most tragic sites from the previous half-century of Christian-Muslim conflict. A Turkish fleet landed in July of 1570, quickly conquered most of the island, and then laid siege to Famagusta, which held out until August of 1571 when, its gunpowder and food supply exhausted, the Venetian captain Marcantonio Bragadin negotiated a surrender by which his soldiers and the civilian population would have safe passage to Crete. Most, however, were massacred, and Bragadin himself was mutilated, forced to undergo a series of humiliations for two weeks, and flayed alive; his skin was then cured and stuffed, mounted on a cow, and paraded through the streets, before finally being presented to the sultan.⁴ Such savagery, from both Muslims and Christians, was not unusual in the wars for control of the eastern Mediterranean, but "the fall of Cyprus captured the imagination of Europe as few other events have done,"⁵ and thus the play's protagonist and setting, a doomed Venetian commander of Cyprus, emphasize the conflict between Christianity and Islam.

To what purpose does Shakespeare invoke this conflict? In exploring this question, I would like to build upon some of the discoveries and insights of Daniel J. Vitkus, who has related that juxtaposition of Christianity and Islam to Europe's internal religious conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism, and Julia Reinhard Lupton, who has related it to Pauline teaching on baptism and circumcision.⁶ Vitkus argues that the play "exhibits a conflation of various tropes of conversion" and "draws on early modern anxieties about Ottoman aggression," which it links to anxieties about not only licentiousness but also conversion or reversion to Islam or Roman Catholicism: "The interest in Christian-Muslim conversions [was] clearly related to contemporaneous political writings about Protestants and Roman Catholics who renounced one brand of Christianity for the other." Iago's claim that Othello will "renounce his baptism" (2.3.338) and the latter's suicide, in which he smites "the circumcised dog" (5.2.353) and so "reenact[s] a version of his own circumcision," indicate that the Moor reverts "to the black Muslim other, the Europeans' phobic fantasy."⁷ Lupton reads the suicide similarly: what Othello scorns, circumcision, he returns onto himself. He undergoes, quite literally, a circumcision

of the heart, but “the suicide effects a circumcision according to the Judeo-Islamic paradigm,” rather than the Pauline one. In addition, Lupton recognizes something key that most reflections on Othello’s race overlook: that within the Christian tradition there is a positive valuation of blackness and that Othello originally appears as “the black Gentile of a universal church.” Iago’s racism is marked by the play “as historically bankrupted through the epochal weight granted to Othello as a latter-day Balthazar,” the black wise man, and “the marriage of white and black, of Greek and barbarian, far from representing a monstrosity or scandal, assumes almost cosmic significance, its harmonies resonating with the exultant coloratura of the Song of Songs.”⁸

Othello, in his moral and spiritual collapse, does conform to stereotypes of the black or Muslim other—violent, jealous, gullible, mercurial—and so his suicide may be read as a reversion or conversion to Islam. Indeed, he becomes not only the Muslim of European stereotype, but also an image of Muhammad himself. Vitkus points out that “Othello’s epilepsy recalls that of the Ur-Moor, Mohammad,” and this is but one of the ways in which the Prophet, according to European accounts from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, corresponds to Othello.⁹ Given these numerous parallels, Shakespeare clearly models his character on the most famous of all Moors. Muhammad was, purportedly, irrationally violent, a man of the sword; easily susceptible to influences, in particular, the instrument of a scheming monk who used him to spread heresy; a magus who through sorcery and lies convinces the Arabs that he is the messiah; a wanderer, whose exotic adventures take on the flavor of a romance; a worshipper of Venus.¹⁰ Likewise, Othello is a man of violence, as with his “good sword” he has made his “way through more impediments / Than twenty times your stop” (5.2.260–2). His murder of his wife seems the reemergence of an irrepressible fury like the mythical Muhammad’s. Othello kills Desdemona, having been tricked by the lies of his “ancient,” like the monk not only in scheming but also in heresy, as will be seen, and in the origin of his resentment: according to Guibert de Nogent, the monk was passed over for an (ecclesiastical) office. In his wounded pride he sought revenge on the church, and so the “Ancient Enemy,” Satan, told him to find Muhammad and “fill his vigorous, receptive mind with the teaching that lies near to your heart. Pursue this man, who will listen faithfully to your teachings and propagate them far and wide.”¹¹ Othello had won Desdemona’s love through his own lies of romantic adventure, “his travailous history” of encounters with anthropophagi and “men

whose heads / Do grow beneath their shoulders" (1.3.129–70). These stories Brabantio understands to be a kind of "witchcraft" (1.3.65), and here again Othello comports with the Muhammad of European legend. His "first gift" to Desdemona, the spotted handkerchief made by an Egyptian "charmer," has "magic in the web" (3.4.57–71). Further, in his opening and closing speeches, Othello testifies to his service to Venice (1.2.17–24; 5.2.337), but these may be the confines of a running pun, as in his obsession with lechery he testifies to the power of Venus. So, too, the honeymooner's frequent references to the moon and its influence (1.3.85; 3.3.181; 4.2.78; 5.2.99, 108–10) may identify him with Muhammad, as the crescent has long been the primary symbol of Islam.

Muhammad is not Othello's only supposedly dark-skinned prototype, however, and Lupton's assessment of him as a "latter-day Balthazar" merits consideration. Balthazar is a name that appears frequently in Shakespeare, always for a sympathetic character, most famously the "young doctor of Rome" whom Portia impersonates, but also for her trustworthy servant; Romeo's loyal servant who is friends with the friar; Antipholus of Ephesus's friend who wisely urges patience in *The Comedy of Errors*; and the humble musician in *Much Ado about Nothing*. Although his name does not, Balthazar's attributes do appear in *Othello*. The Magi were invoked against epilepsy, and Balthazar was the one believed to have given the Christ Child myrrh, the "medicinal gum" that drops fast from Arabian trees (5.2.348–9).¹² Othello's possible association with Balthazar seems all the more likely when one recognizes that the other popular black Christian saint of early modern Europe, Maurice, is also a model.¹³ According to *The Golden Legend*, Maurice, "from *maurron* . . . the Greek word for black," was from Thebes, "beyond the border of Arabia," and "had bitterness from dwelling in misery and being far from his native land." He was commander of the Theban Legion, which was summoned to put down a revolt in Gaul. Because of their refusal to sacrifice to idols and kill innocent Christians, he and his companions were martyred during the reign of Diocletian, a martyrdom he willingly accepted: "I have kept the command the Lord gave Peter: 'Put your sword into its sheath!'"¹⁴ Starting in the thirteenth century he was depicted as black in much of Europe,¹⁵ and was invoked as the patron of weavers, dyers, swordsmiths, and cramp sufferers.¹⁶ His popularity and association with the ideals of chivalry were such that two chivalric orders were dedicated to him, in 1434 and 1572, the latter of which had as its explicit purpose serving the Holy See and combating the Reformation.¹⁷

The heroic black soldier who orders men to sheathe their swords (1.2.59–61); the paragon of chivalry who suffers far from home; the sufferer of a kind of cramp, epilepsy; the giver of a dyed cloth (3.4.76)—that Maurice is a model for Othello seems clear. But what is the play's purpose in identifying the same black man with Muhammad, traditionally regarded as an anti-Christ,¹⁸ and with the saints Maurice and Balthazar? Why have a single character suggest the black men who represented the poles of vice and virtue for European Christians? It may prove helpful to turn to the significance of blackness in the Judeo-Christian tradition. It was equated with sin, and the dark-skinned nations were supposedly the descendents of Ham, Noah's son who beheld him naked (Gen. 9:18–27). That act was figured in the Midrash as castration of his father, for which he was cursed with blackness and an elongated penis.¹⁹ By the sixteenth century one popular interpretation was that looking at his father's nakedness indicated lechery, and so "the African or Moor has built into his nature an unlawful relationship with the privy, secret parts of the body."²⁰ The identification of Ham's descendant Nimrod (Gen. 10:8–9), the "mighty warrior," links tyranny and violence, again a type of incontinence, with Africans. St. Ambrose, for example, calls Nimrod an Ethiopian.²¹ Yet the Church Fathers read the "black, but comely" Bride in the Song of Solomon and other black characters in the Bible, such as Moses's Ethiopian wife (Num. 12:1), the Queen of Sheba, Ebed-melech the Ethiopian eunuch who saves Jeremiah (Jer. 38:7–13), and the Ethiopian eunuch for whom Philip explicates Isaiah (Acts 8: 26–40), as types of the redeemed soul and of the church, the Bride of Christ. Origen, for example, writes that the beautiful black Bride has "drawn near to him who is the image of God, the first-born of all creation, the radiance of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature," and, as Jean Devisse explains, she has been made beautiful and even been made white through the light shed by the spiritual Sun, whatever her appearance.²² Ambrose reads the apostle John, reclining on the Lord's breast (John 13:23), as himself like the Bride, black and beautiful: his flesh has become black from the dust of the world picked up during the struggle against sin, but his soul has been made beautiful because of the sacrament of baptism, which "removes the blackness of sin."²³

The antithetical uses made of blackness in the Christian tradition seem highly significant for Shakespeare's work: black and white come together, or almost do, not just overtly in *Othello*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Tempest*, and the *Sonnets*, but also, more subtly, again in *Merchant* (Gratiano,

"Graced," marries "Nerissa," "Blackie"), in *The Taming of the Shrew* (the suitors seek, and find themselves disappointed by, "Bianca"), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (the Athenian youths go back and forth between "fair" Helena and the "Ethiope" Hermia), and *Hamlet* (the inky-cloaked Prince rejects Ophelia of the "white bosom").²⁴ But it is in *Othello* in which "Janus" is invoked (1.2.33), in which most everything can be perceived in two diametrically opposed ways—Iago is "honest" and diabolical; Emilia treacherous and faithful; Cassio a courtly gentleman and a whoremonger; the Venetians defenders of Christendom who "turn Turk"—that contrary ideas about blackness and the union of black and white are most prominent. The play itself is a most painful tragedy that repeatedly employs the conventions of comedy. Is its protagonist another Maurice or another Muhammad? Is Brabantio's daughter marrying "the valiant Moor" or is "an old black ram / . . . tugging [his] white ewe" (1.1.87–8)?

It is Iago who implants in the mind of Brabantio a horror of miscegenation, and Iago, of course, implants "thoughts" into Othello (3.3.97–164), deceiving him, who had believed Desdemona chaste and loving, into believing her adulterous and duplicitous. He uses her very love for her husband to sully her character and thus make Othello think she does not love him. Iago had first argued to Roderigo that Desdemona's marriage is proof that she is not "full of most blest condition": "If she had been blest she would have never loved the Moor" (2.1.247–51). Then, he insinuates to Othello that their marriage reveals that she is dishonest—"She did deceive her father, marrying you" (3.3.209)—and unnatural, as she has turned down matches with those of her own "complexion" (3.3.234). Othello picks up on Iago's connection between her deception and his skin color, that a white woman willing to marry a black man cannot be honest. He, in fact, first concludes not just that adultery is a possibility but that "she's gone, I am abused, and my relief / Must be to loathe her" right after he considers whether his race makes him repellent: "Haply for I am black" (3.3.267). He then identifies her supposedly sinful condition with his color and by doing so identifies himself with sin: "Her name, that was as fresh / as Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black / As mine own face" (3.3.389–91). After that, his blackness becomes increasingly a signifier of evil. He invokes "black vengeance from the hollow hell," swears by the Black Sea it will be accomplished (3.3.450, 456–8), and kills Desdemona in the dark, becoming a "blacker devil" (5.2.128). All the while, Othello loses not just the character but the attributes of Maurice and Balthazar. His sword is taken. His handkerchief, the dyed piece of cloth, is lost, and with the theme of magic

reintroduced through the Egyptian charmer, his “witchcraft,” understood by the Venetians as benevolent, like Balthazar’s, no longer seems so, and thus he is a black magus, like Muhammad. Under the influence of the moon, he suffers from at least one type of cramp, epilepsy, as if he were without the intercessory power of the black saints, and so in yet another way becomes another Muhammad.

How is it that Othello changes from being like the representatives of one religion to the representative of another? How is it that he goes mad? “I’faith you are to blame,” Desdemona tells him (3.4.98). Just as the heretical monk gives Muhammad his faith, Othello’s faith is given to him by Iago, whose very words poison his mind, Othello explains, using the simile of a black bird: “Thou said’st—O, it comes o’er my memory / As doth the raven o’er the infectious house / Boding to all” (4.1.20–2). Othello’s darkened mind parallels his dark skin, which he has been led to see as being analogous to the blackness of sin, and the idea of sin Iago has given him—pervasive, indelibly marked in the soul—is decidedly Protestant.²⁵ Iago first argues from a Calvinist belief in total depravity to provoke Roderigo to continue his pursuit of Desdemona, who must be governed by concupiscence, he says, which cannot be sated by her aging husband (1.3.350–2).²⁶ He also denigrates reason to being merely a faculty that allows “the blood and baseness of our natures” to seek fulfillment of carnal desire without undue misery (1.3.329), and throughout this appeal attests to the will’s utter corruption (1.3.320–36). Desdemona’s will, “most rank,” he later tells Othello, will “repent” of marrying him since he cannot match “her country forms,” the vulgar pun hinting that her husband cannot hope to govern her sexual desire (3.3.236–42). Because of her willfulness, their bed must be “contaminated” (4.1.205), Iago says, using the metaphor of contamination or corruption that recurs throughout Calvin’s *Institutes*.²⁷ Iago’s insistence on the pervasiveness of contamination follows from the Reformed teaching that even after baptism, according to *The Formula of Concord* (1580), the blemish of sin “inheres in the nature, substance and essence of man in such a way that . . . man’s nature is corrupted through original sin, innate in us through our sinful seed and the source of all other, actual sins.”²⁸ Othello has been led to believe that his whole self, soul and body, is blemished and that Desdemona’s white skin, like her white sheets, only covers up the spots beneath (5.1.36). In other words, Othello now believes the Reformed teaching that justification is merely forensic, the imputation of grace to make the soul appear just rather than the infusion to make it actually just, something to which he had heard Iago allude when he claimed that Desdemona gave “out such

a seeming / To seel her father's eyes up, close as oak" (3.3.211–12): the father is blind to sin because of a cloak (seeming is seaming) of righteousness so that the soul seems just. The Reformed teaching on baptism, in opposition to the Catholic teaching that the soul is actually cleansed of original sin and that the remaining inclination to sin is not sin itself, is the grounding for the teaching on justification, which declares that the soul, because of the inhering darkness of sin, cannot cooperate with prevenient grace and participate in its own justification and so is dependent solely on a forensic justification. As Vitkus and Lupton have recognized, the play revolves around a movement from baptism to circumcision, but that parallels a deeper movement from one understanding of baptism to another. For Othello to "renounce his baptism, / All seals and symbols of redeemed sin" (2.3.338–9), means to renounce a belief in a "holy and indelible seal" by which original sin and actual sins are remitted and to renounce a belief in the symbol of the redeemed sinner, the white soul.²⁹ The indelible mark of baptism is thus for Othello replaced by the indelible marks of sin and circumcision.

What Vitkus calls Othello's "self-annihilation," his being reduced to nothing, seems to follow from a renunciation of baptism.³⁰ There is a pattern of negation of the ceremonials that *The Catechism of the Council of Trent* (1566) deems important for baptism.³¹ Rather than reject Satan and all his promises and profess his faith in God, Othello binds himself forever to the diabolical Iago (3.3.217) and abjures faith in the "divine Desdemona" (2.1.73). He thinks his wedding sheets, a white garment such as the one the baptized wear to attest to the soul's "brightness and beauty . . . when purified from the stains of sin," are spotted. He snuffs out a lighted candle, such as the one put into the hand of the baptized. And he loses his name, such as is given during the sacrament. Iago had avoided naming him, using racist epithets instead, and in the last act Othello, too, gives up his own name; he "was Othello" (5.2.281), but is no longer. Moreover, the effects of baptism are absent, such as the ability by "the different members of the body" to complete "the proper performance of their respective functions."³² Othello, instead, cashiers "a member of his love" (3.4.113). Cassio prays that Othello "may bless this bay with his tall ship, / Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms" (2.1.79–80), but Othello is one of those husbands who "slack their duties" (4.3.86). His sword is snatched away (5.2.242). In this play that draws upon one of the stock plots of comedy, the old husband who cannot satisfy the young wife, allusions to impotence and castration are frequent. Whether unable or uninterested, Othello apparently never

consummates his marriage.³³ That he will not “shed [Desdemona’s] blood” (5.2.3) on the bed signifies more than just his attempt to offer a pure sacrifice. Indeed, because he does nothing to her, he cannot perform a sacrifice (5.2.64–5), which Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologiae* distinguishes from an oblation: “A sacrifice in the proper sense of the word means that something is done to the thing offered to God, for example, when animals were killed and burned, and when bread is blessed, broken, and eaten. . . . Oblation, on the other hand, is the direct offering of something to God, even if nothing is done to it.”³⁴ Othello leaves Desdemona “undone” (5.2.75). Likewise, the handkerchief Othello gives Desdemona is to have the “work ta’en out” (3.3.300; see also 3.4.180, 4.1.150–5). Literally, its pattern is to be copied, but the language of doing and not doing work points to the argument about the effects of baptism, whether one is infused or not with the virtues of Christ that help one perform Christian duties, and to the related justification controversy. Othello, not so subtly articulating the Protestant objection to the Catholic teaching that works of love may merit grace, condemns Desdemona: “she did gratify [Cassio’s] amorous works” (5.2.211).³⁵ Yet the transformation from the gallant soldier to the comic stereotype of the impotent old husband unable to perform such works is his condemnation. He becomes another Ethiopian eunuch, like the court official in Acts instructed and baptized by Philip, but one instructed and de-baptized by Iago.

On the island lost to Christianity, Shakespeare, from the island lost to the Catholic Church, represents what is lost in the movement from Catholic to Protestant understandings of baptism, the cleansing from sin, so that Othello comes to believe himself spiritually as well as physically black, falsely assumes the spiritual darkness of another, degenerates from possessing the virtues of a Maurice or Balthazar to possessing the supposed vices of a Muhammad, and lacks the regenerative strength of baptism to perform “amorous works.” He ultimately believes his own coloring is “his sign from god”—what “Othello” means in Hebrew according to Florence Amit³⁶—that reflects his and others’ sinfulness. Othello’s anxiety about color casts the play’s religious differences in a new light, apostasy from Christianity paralleling apostasy from Catholicism, Islam an analogue for Protestantism since both imply the renunciation of baptism, be it the sacrament itself or its effects as taught by the Catholic Church. The “blackest sins” Iago “put[s] on” Othello as well as on himself and the “pestilence” he pours in Othello’s ear “with heavenly shows” sound much like Reformed teaching. This is the “divinity of hell” (2.3.345–51). It seems likely that Shakespeare is sympathetic to Catholic teaching on

baptism and justification; it is indubitable that he abhors Reformed teaching. The beliefs that the soul is not cleansed by baptism and that human nature is totally depraved Shakespeare presents as destructive. Iago's representation to Othello of himself and others as darkened by irremovable sin leads to despair and damnation (5.2.271–8); the Black Sea, the baptismal waters that do not clean, is a “compulsive course / ...[that] keeps due on / To the ... *Hellespont*” (3.3.458–9; italics added). Othello suffers from the falling sickness because of what Iago has taught him are the irremediable effects of the Fall.

NOTES

1. William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. E. A. J. Honigmann (London: Thomson Learning, 2002). Future references will be given parenthetically.
2. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Arthur Golding; ed. John Frederick Nims (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2000).
3. Hesiod, *Theogony*, trans. Richmond Lattimore (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1959), 176–200.
4. John Julius Norwich, *Venice: The Greatness and the Fall* (London: Penguin, 1981), 205–21.
5. H. D. Purcell, *Cyprus* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969), 168.
6. Daniel Vitkus, “Turning Turk in *Othello*: The Conversion and Damnation of the Moor,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 48 (1997): 145–76; Julia Reinhard Lupton, “*Othello* Circumcised: Shakespeare and the Pauline Discourse of Nations,” *Representations* 57 (1997): 73–89.
7. Vitkus “Turning Turk,” 145, 146, 152, 174, 176.
8. Lupton, “*Othello* Circumcised,” 84, 73, 78, 77.
9. Ibid., 155.
10. Svetlana Luchitskaja, “The Image of Muhammad in Latin Chronology of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries,” *Journal of Medieval History* 26.2 (2000): 115–26.
11. Guibert de Nogent, *The Deeds of God through the Franks*, trans. Robert Levine (Suffolk, UK: The Boydell Press, 1997), 33.
12. Sandra D. Haynes and Thomas L. Bennett, *The Neuropsychology of Epilepsy* (New York: Springer, 1982). Haynes and Bennett also point out that epilepsy was “believed to be caused by the goddess of the moon and was sometimes called the disease of the moon” (8).
13. To the best of my knowledge, the only other person who has argued for St. Maurice as a model for Othello is David Wilson, who asks, “Was there a historical Othello? I say yes! He was St. Maurice, one of the patron saints of Germany.” David Wilson, “Did You Know That?,” *Sir Raglan Presents*, <http://www.oocities.org/raglanr/black.html#unknown>, accessed April 3, 2011. A review by Diana Simmonds of a production of *Othello* mentions that

- Shakespeare's "idea of 'Black'...would have been informed by complex historical factors. He would not have seen it with his own eyes but he would have known of the fabled statue of the Black Knight—St. Maurice—in Magdeburg Cathedral." Diana Simmonds, "Othello," *Stage Noise* May 22, 2007, <http://www.stagenoise.com/reviewsdisplay.php?id=126>, accessed April 3, 2011. The 2006 Oxford University Press edition of *Othello*, edited by Michael Neill, has on its cover an image of St. Maurice from a painting from the school of Lucas Cranach.
14. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, vol. 2, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 188–92.
 15. Gude Suckale-Redlefsen and Robert Suckale, *The Black Saint Maurice* (Houston, Texas: Menil Foundation, 1987). See also Jean Devisse, *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 2, part 1, trans. William Granger Ryan (New York: William Morrow, 1979), 149–205.
 16. Francis Merishman, "St. Maurice," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 10 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), 68–9. Though not the type of patronage to be mentioned in Butler's *Lives of the Saints* or *The Golden Legend*, Maurice popularly may also have been invoked against menstrual cramps, worth noting in light of the handkerchief and the references to the moon.
 17. Mario de Valdes, "Sigillum Secretum: On the Image of the Blackamoor in European Heraldry" *Frontline*, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/secret/famous/sssecretum1.html>, accessed April 4, 2011.
 18. Luchitskaja, "The Image of Muhammad," 120.
 19. Robert Earl Hood, *Begrimed and Black: Christian Traditions on Blacks and Blackness* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1994), 155.
 20. Jack D'Amico, *The Moor in English Renaissance Drama* (Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1991), 64–5.
 21. *Ibid.*, 18.
 22. Quoted in Devisse, "The Image of the Black," 15–16.
 23. *Ibid.*, 17. St. Jerome in his reading of Psalm 67 also equates whiteness with cleansing from sin: "In the past we were Ethiopians, being made so by our sins and vices. How? Because sin had made us black. But then we heeded Isaiah (Is. 1:16)—'wash yourselves, be clean'—and we said, 'Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow' (Ps. 51:9). Thus we, Ethiopians that we were, transformed ourselves and became white" (quoted in Devisse 27).
 24. Clare Asquith, *Shadowlands: The Hidden Beliefs and Coded Politics of William Shakespeare* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2005), argues that white is Shakespeare's code for Catholicism and black for Protestantism. That seems overly simple, and the opposite may be closer to the truth. In "*Sigillum Secretum*" de Valdes writes that the

- black St. Maurice “would become the champion of the old Roman church and an opposition symbol to the growing influence of Luther and Calvin.” Devisse explains how Albert of Brandenburg, the Archbishop of Magdeburg and one of Luther’s greatest enemies, encouraged devotion to St. Maurice as part of his resistance to the Reformation (185–93).
25. Anthony Gilbert, “*Othello*, the Baroque, and Religious Mentalities,” *Early Modern Literary Studies* 7.2 (2001): 1–21, also sees Iago as expressing the Calvinist principle of total depravity. He further argues that “when we turn to Iago we find, if we historicise his attitudes and remarks in contemporary terms, another set of ideas which have a distinctly protestant flavor” (13). Richard Mallette, “Blasphemous Preacher: Iago and the Reformation,” in *Shakespeare and the Culture of Christianity in Early Modern England*, eds. Dennis Taylor and David Beauregard (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 382–414, finds that Iago employs Reformed homiletic methods.
 26. Likewise, “her appetite shall play the god / With his weak function” (2.3.342–3).
 27. For example, “The heart is so thoroughly soaked in poison of sinne, that it can breathe out nothing but corrupt stink” (2.5.19). In another passage on the “corruption of nature,” Calvin explains that the grace of God acts “not to cleanse it, but inwardly to restrain it” (2.3.3), a thought that parallels Iago’s explanation of the relation between reason and concupiscence (1.3.330–3); from *The Institution of Christian Religion*, trans. Richarde Harrison (London, 1562).
 28. In addition, the *Formula* rejects and condemns “the view that this blemish [of original sin] may be removed as readily as a spot can be washed from the face or color from the wall,” from *The Book of Concord*, Art. I, antitheses 5,9, trans. Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.: Fortress Press, 1959), 468.
 29. William Fanning, “Baptism,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 2 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), 258–74.
 30. Daniel Vitkus, “The ‘O’ in *Othello*: Tropes of Damnation and Nothingness,” in *Othello: New Critical Essays*, ed. Philip C. Kolin (New York: Routledge, 2002), 347–62.
 31. *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, trans. John A. McHugh and Charles J. Callan, (Rockford, Illinois: Tan Books, 1982), 203–9.
 32. *Ibid.*, 208, 199.
 33. T. G. A. Nelson and Charles Haines, “*Othello*’s Unconsummated Marriage,” in *Essays in Criticism* 33 (1983): 1–18, and Graham Bradshaw, “Obeying the Time in *Othello*: A Myth and the Mess It Made,” *English Studies* 73.3 (1992): 211–28, also argue that the marriage is never consummated.
 34. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, trans. Kevin D. O’Rourke, O. P. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), II–II Q. 85 a.3 ad 3.

35. Luther in his *Defense and Explanation of all the Articles* writes, "If it be considered as it really is in the judgment of God, every work of the just is worthy of damnation and a mortal sin," quoted in Johann Adam Mohler, *Symbolism*, trans. James Burton Robertson (New York: Crossroads, 1997), 22.
36. Quoted by David Basch, "Re: Othello's Name," *SHAKSPER: The Global Electronic Shakespeare Conference*, March 18, 2005, <http://www.shaksper.net/archives/2005/0532.html>.

CHAPTER 2



ISLAM, RACE, AND POLITICAL LEGITIMACY IN RALEGH'S *THE LIFE* *AND DEATH OF MAHOMET*

Dennis Austin Britton

*They were (indeede) at the first very far off from our Clyme &
Region, and therefore the lesse to be feared, but now they are even
at our doores and ready to come into our Houses.*

—Thomas Newton, *A notable historie of the Saracens* (1575)

In the “Epistle Dedicatory” for *A notable historie of the Saracens*, Thomas Newton articulates a commonly expressed early modern English anxiety: that Islamic peoples might conquer European Christians.¹ Although Newton and others represented Turks and Moors as tyrannical rulers needing to be feared, recent scholarship continues to uncover the complexity of early modern European views of Muslims.² Sir Walter Raleigh’s *The Life and Death of Mahomet, The Conquest of Spaine Together with the Rysing and Ruine of the Sarazen Empire* (published posthumously in 1637) illustrates the complexity of English engagements with Muslims within a single text. Although vilified at times, Moors prove to be more legitimate rulers of Spain than Spaniards. Moreover, while there are both virtuous and villainous Moors in this history, no Spaniard is portrayed in a favorable light: the text represents all Spaniards as traitors to both Christianity and Spain. Although Raleigh’s long-standing hatred of Spain—one that seems out of place in Jacobean England—is seen in *The Life’s*

representation of Spaniards, what is more surprising is the history's simultaneous condemnation of Islam and validation of the Moorish occupation of Spain.³ Raleigh's *The Life* contrasts with the pervading fear that "untamed Moor[s]" would become "Lords and Rulers of well-governed Cities"⁴; it suggests that Spain is overthrown because it is not "well-governed." *The Life* thus can be read as a cautionary tale about the dangers of poor political leadership, using Spain as its primary example. But as Moorish rule is represented as more legitimate than Spanish rule in a text that nevertheless demonizes Islam, *The Life* also reveals an early modern English interest in establishing political legitimacy independent of race and religion.

RACE AND POLITICAL LEGITIMACY

That being ruled by tyrannical Muslim rulers was a fear becomes evident when one looks at how Muslim rulers were represented in the early modern English imagination. The "Negro Moor" Muly Hamet, for instance, in George Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar* (1594) introduced the black Moor as a usurping villain: he is "blacke in his looke, and bloudie in his deeds."⁵ The play suggests a correlation between black looks and bloody deeds, and Muly Hamet's political villainy is equated with a marker of racial identity: black skin. In addition to the early modern stage, literature written by English merchants and captives in North Africa stereotyped Moors as cruel. John Rawlins, for example, states in the concluding remarks of his 1622 captivity narrative: "Nor do I think you will be startled at anything in the discourse touching the cruelty and inhumanity of Turks and Moors themselves, who from a native barbarousness do hate all Christians and Christianity."⁶ Rawlins does not explain what he means by "native barbarousness," but the phrase suggests that the quality of cruelty toward Christians is an inherent or racial characteristic.⁷ Moreover, Rawlins illustrates just how commonplace such perceptions of Turks and Moors were; according to Rawlins, no Englishman would have found his descriptions of them surprising.

What we observe in both Peele and Rawlins is that political predisposition toward tyranny was seen as having a connection to what could be considered the racial makeup of Islamic peoples. In this, both Peele and Rawlins participate in a long-established tradition that linked questions about race and political legitimacy. They participate in the kind of early modern "ethnic theology" that Colin Kidd describes: "Matters of race, ethnicity and the genealogies and relationships of peoples and nations were...part of the province

of theology.... [T]he Mosaic history of the peopling of the world established broad parameters of Christian orthodoxy for ethnological speculation."⁸ This theology, moreover, inevitably became politicized as it asserted who was and was not divinely endowed with the right to govern. That the Bible could be read in early modern England as establishing a linkage between race and political legitimacy is seen in George Best's *A True Discourse of the Late Voyages of Discoverie* (1578):

It manifestly and plainly appeareth in holy Scripture, that after the generall Inundation and overflowing of the Earth there remained no more men alive, but Noe & his three sonnes, Sem, Cham, and Iaphet, who onely were left to possesse & inhabit the whole face of the earth... Sem, Cham, or Iapeth, as the onley sonnes of Noe, who all three being white, and their wives also, by course of nature, should have begotten and brought forth white children... his wicked sonne Cham disobeyed, and being persuaded that the first childe borne after the floud (by right & law of nature) should inherit & possesse all the dominion of the earth, he, contrarie to his fathers commandment, while they were yet in the Arke, use company with his wife, & craftily went about, thereby to disinherit the ofspring of his two bretheren, for which wicked and detestable fact, as an example for contempt to Almighty God, and disobedience of parents, God would a sonne shuld be borne, whose name was Chus, who not only it selfe, but all his posterite after him, should be so blacke & lothsome, that it might remaine a spectacle of disobedience too all the World. And of this blacke & cursed Chus came all these blacke Moores which are in Africa.⁹

Best's history is an extension of that given in Genesis 9, which recounts Noah's cursing Ham's descendants into servitude: "cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren" (9:25, AV). Although the fact that blackness was read as a "spectacle of disobedience" is commonly recognized in readings of Best, what has been noted far less is that blackness also was seen as a mark of the unfitness to rule. Attempting to disprove geohumoral theories of race, Best represents blackness as a visible sign of God's judgment—one that continued to be read as such well into and after the early modern period—that was a constant reminder of a power struggle among brothers over "the dominion of the earth."¹⁰ As "manifestly and plainly appeareth in holy Scripture," the racial marker of blackness became a sign of God's judgment that was used to reassert the rightness of white, European domination, thus excising the fear that "bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be."¹¹

Although it would be erroneous to make an explicit connection between the descendents of Ham and the Moors that conquer Spain (Raleigh notes that Moors are Arabs who settled in North Africa), Best provides an example of the connections that early moderns made among race, genealogy, and political legitimacy. Moreover, though it is true, as Nabil Matar has asserted, that the English did make distinctions between the skin colors of North Africans and sub-Saharan Africans, it is equally true that they often did not, especially in the popular imagination as manifested on the early modern stage.¹² But Best's is not the only account of the descendents of Ham that circulated in early modern England.¹³ *Mandeville's Travels*, which was continually published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, provided an alternative genealogy: "Noe had three sones, Sem, Cham & Japeth... These three brothern had all land. Then Cham tooke the best part Eastward, that is called Asia, Sem tooke Africke, and Iapeht tooke Europe. Cham was the mightiest and richest of his brethren, and of him are some of the Panim folke, and divers maner of men of those Iles, some headlesse, & other men disfigured."¹⁴ In addition to being genealogically related to monsters, Ham's descendents are linked to Asia and "Panim folke"—suggestive links because they place Ham's offspring in a relationship with the Muslim and Paynim knights of medieval and early modern romance and in a geographical site associated with Muslim peoples.

In spite of these conflicting accounts, it is clear that these ethnic theologies were interested in whose descendents were given authority to govern specific parts of the earth. It is Ham and his descendents, however, who seem to cause the greatest anxiety: they are represented as being discontented with the restrictions placed on them by Noah. We see this in Best, in Ham's desire to "possesse all the dominion of the earth." But we also see this in Richard Linche's *An historical treatise of the travels of Noah into Europe* (1601): "*Cham*, (contrarie to the appointment of *Noe*) not contented with the soveraigne domination of Affrica, had there wrongfully usurped the siegnore of Italie" and "had most abhominably corrupted the youth of Italie with all manner of impieties, vices, and odious sinnes."¹⁵ His desire to rule kingdoms other than those originally granted to him by Noah is placed alongside his vices, most notably those of magic, for which reason "hee was called generally throughout the word, *Cam Efenuus, id est, Cam infamis, impudicus propagator*. Some have thought, [t]hat the turke for those and such like causes, is called in his letters patents, *le grand Cam de Tartaria*."¹⁶ Although Turks may not be actual descents of Ham, Linche's statement reveals that Turks and their imperial desires

were seen as analogous to those of Ham. Again, I do not wish to conflate Turks, North African Moors, sub-Saharan Africans, and peoples from the Middle East. More generally, however, I do wish to assert that these genealogies of Ham reveal early modern anxieties about peoples from the south and the east invading and illegitimately ruling European nations.

ISLAM AND POLITICAL LEGITIMACY

Anxieties about non-Europeans governing European nations were not only based on racial difference but also on religious difference, and this was often expressed in fears that Europeans would be forced to convert to Islam. Raleigh's translation of a text that praises Muslim rulers is thus all the more unexpected. *The Life* is a translation of Miguel de Luna's *Historia verdadera del rey don Rodrigo: en la qual se trata la causa principal de la pèrdida de España, y la conquista que de ella hizo Miramamolin Almançor, rey que fue del Africa, y de las Arabias; y vida del rey Jacob Almançor* [*True history of King Rodrigo: which treats the principle cause of the loss of Spain, and its conquest by Miramamolin Almançor, who was king of Africa, and of Arabia, and the life of King Jacob Almançor*] (1606). Luna's reasons for writing this history are less surprising. Luna was a Morisco and an official translator of Arabic in the courts of Philip II and III, and his *Historia verdadera* rewrites the history of the conquest that had been passed down through medieval legends—in Luna's history, the last Visigoth monarch, Don Roderigo, is a rapist and a usurping tyrant who needs to be overthrown.¹⁷ Luna's Morisco identity undoubtedly affects the history that he writes: his narrative attempts to counter the Maurophobia of his day by representing noble Moorish characters. Raleigh's translation of this history works against what we might see as an early modern European racial—or at least genealogical—politics, one that based the right to rule in biblical history.¹⁸

At the same time, Raleigh's history attempts to strike a careful balance between validating the Moorish conquest and praising Almanzor, and making it clear that Islam is a false religion. Raleigh's means for doing so can be seen in the title itself. Although the title may be the publisher's invention, the differences between Raleigh's title and Luna's announces that Raleigh's text is most concerned with Spanish history, which, for Raleigh, begins with Muhammad; his translation attempts to create a unified history from the birth of Muhammad to the conquest of Spain in order to create a confluence of Spanish history and Islamic history. While Raleigh includes Luna's descriptions

of noble Moorish characters and the description of Almanzor's governing (both, however, in a much abbreviated form), his text is much more concerned with the conquest of Spain.

Before covering the topic of the Moorish conquest of Spain, however, Raleigh finds it necessary to remind the reader of the origins of the Muslim faith, a faith that he repeatedly demonizes. Raleigh's text begins with a history of Muhammad and the origins of Islam, but there is no such history in Luna's text. The history of Muhammad and Islam that begins Raleigh's history can be read as a type of preface to the narrative, affecting how the reader understands the events in the history. Muhammad is thoroughly demonized in the narrative, and this becomes the primary means through which the reader questions not only the faith that Muhammad reveals but also the political empire he is described as birthing. After the history describes how Muhammad comes to found the Islamic faith, it becomes more concerned with the relation between political legitimacy and religious truth. According to Raleigh, with his new "doctrine" established, Muhammad "spread the poison it contained over all the Arrabies, but the wiser sort fearing (as they had cause) that the settling of a new Religion, might also draw with it a new forme of government; opposed themselves against it, calling *Mahomet* an Imposter" (14).¹⁹ Raleigh makes it clear that the "wiser sort...had cause" to fear, and in so doing he represents Islam as a spreading religious and political entity. The growth of Islam as a religion is also connected to political concerns just a few sentences later. Taking advantage of local unrest in Mecca, Muhammad "enlarged his thoughts, holding it no lesse difficult for him to obtaine a kingdom, then the title of a Prophet which he had obtained" (16). There is a flippancy in Raleigh's language, but it undoubtedly reveals anxieties over the political power Muhammad gains in connection to becoming a prophet.

From this point forward the narrative details both Muhammad's exploits as a conqueror and the caliphs that succeed him, though all the while reminding the reader that Muhammad is an "imposter." Another way that Raleigh vilifies Islam is through questioning the Abrahamic origins of Muhammad and Arabian peoples. In doing so the narrative itself creates a connection among race, religion, and political legitimacy:

This false Prophet and usurping Prince [Muhammad], pretended paternally to discend from the Patriarch *Abraham* by his eldest Sonne *Ismael*, and to avoid the infamie of an unlawful bed his successors affirmed that *Ismael* was Sonne of *Sara*, not the bond-woman *Agar*

whereupon the Arabians (which is the undoubted name of that people) are by some writers (of *Ismael*) called Ismalites, by others (of *Agar*) Agarens. And (of *Sara*) Sarazens, but in this latter time they are distinguished by the name of Arabians Moores, and Mahometans, the first is proper only to those which inhabit Arabia: the Mores are the progeny of such Arabians as after their Conquests seated themselves in that part of Africa, the Mahometans is the generall name of all nations that professe *Mahomet*, as Turks, Tartars, Persians, &c. (25–7)

By labeling Muhammad as both “false Prophet and usurping Prince,” Raleigh suggests that these two illegitimate identities—one political and the other religious—are yoked in Muhammad’s person. But here and elsewhere in *The Life* we also see an interest in genealogical origins: it is mentioned at the very beginning of the history that Muhammad’s mother is Jewish and his father is an Arabian pagan. The repeated importance placed on geological origins in *The Life* can be read as yet another testament to the connections between racial—especially race in relation to genealogy—and religious categories of identity in the early modern period.²⁰ The importance of genealogical origins is evident here, so much so that they become a site of contest. Islam presents a threat to an explicitly Christian ethnic theology by presenting an alternative genealogy. Raleigh’s insistence that Muhammad does not have Abrahamic origins and Ishmael is not the son of Sarah reveals that having such origins would have real consequences—not only do these notions conflict with the claims made in Genesis 16, but they also would provide a legitimacy to Muhammad’s genealogy.

As the passage moves from a discussion of Muhammad to “all nations that professe *Mahomet*,” *The Life* also suggests that a fictive genealogy was created by Muhammad in order to establish both his legitimacy and that of Islam. Although one of the purposes of Raleigh’s history is to discredit this legitimacy, what is significant here is that this discrediting is not based on religious belief but on genealogy—discrediting Muhammad’s origins becomes a way to discredit the religion of all who “professe *Mahomet*.” Genealogy legitimizes not only political rule but also religious truth. At the same time, what is related as fictive genealogy works to discredit Islam as both a political and religious entity.

Despite the narrative’s initial desire to discredit Muhammad’s religion and his empire, the text begins to work against the racial and religious politics that it establishes in its discussion of Muhammad. After the account of Muhammad’s life and the origins of Islam, which makes up approximately one-eighth of the entire history, *The Life* rather abruptly introduces a romance narrative of Spanish intrigue,

murder, and lust. The text, however, continues to be interested in questions of religious identity and political legitimacy. The complex narrative begins with Don Roderigo's attempt to murder his nephew, Don Sancho, in order to secure the throne. Don Roderigo is successful in this usurpation, and Don Sancho and his mother eventually die after escaping to Africa. Not surprisingly, Don Roderigo's illegitimacy as a ruler quickly comes into focus. He decides that he needs an heir and "tooke to wife a stranger which happened unto him by a strange accident" (51). Instead of marrying a Spanish or European woman, he chooses to marry a captured Moorish princess, Zabra, whose ship is driven to the coast of Spain by a storm. First, however, Zabra must become a Christian: "*el Rey persuadò à esta Infanta, que si se tornava à su Ley de Christiano, la tomaria pro muger, y que haria señora de sus Reynos. Con esta persuasion ellas fue contenta, y aviendose buetlo Christiana, se casò con ella*" [the King persuaded this Princess that if she would turn to Christian Law, he would take her as a wife, and he would make her the lady of his kingdoms. She was content with this coaxing, and coming to an agreement, she turned Christian, and he married her].²¹ The sincerity of Zabra's religious conversion comes into question; her reasons for becoming a Christian are completely divorced, at least at this point, from spiritual conviction. Even so, her conversion has political consequences: it allows her to become queen of Spain.

This marriage also foreshadows the vacillations of religious affiliation and numerous intermarriages between Moors and Christians in *Historia verdadera* and *The Life*, and these vacillations and intermarriages themselves undermine politics that are based on categories of racial or religious identity. Luna's language emphasizes a connection among Zabra's desire to become queen, religious identity, and political power: at this point in the narrative, being the "correct" religion allows one to rule. Raleigh's translation, however, de-emphasizes this connection: "The young Ladie, though a Mahometan borne, yet to better the condition of a Captive dispensed with her Religion: was Baptized and solemnly married unto him" (54).²² Unlike Luna, Raleigh reminds his reader that Zabra was "a Mahometan borne" and that she "dispensed" with the religion into which she was born. It is certainly true that the reasons for religious conversion in early modern English texts often have little to do with religious conviction—and thus an English reader may not have found Zabra's conversion unusual.²³ Even so, Raleigh is careful to give a reason for Zabra's conversion, a reason that is very different from that given by Luna. Raleigh's text also suggests that Zabra might have been coerced into

abandoning her Muslim faith. Whereas Luna's Zabra is persuaded, Raleigh's Zabra is a captive who hopes to better her condition. Luna's Zabra becomes a Christian to become a queen, while Raleigh's Zabra is a prisoner who converts to better her treatment. Although marrying Don Roderigo certainly makes Zabra a queen in Raleigh's text, Raleigh is careful in his departure from Luna to de-emphasize such a point: becoming queen is the unmentioned consequence rather than the reason for becoming a Christian. Moreover, Raleigh's labeling of Zabra as a captive potentially highlights the coercive influence of Don Roderigo. In this subtle alteration, Raleigh, even more than Luna, points to Don Roderigo's abuse of power.

Although we see Raleigh's subtle departure from Luna in this passage, Raleigh nevertheless follows Luna by highlighting Don Roderigo's abusive power. The real trouble begins when Don Roderigo falls prey to his excessive desire, and the following extended passage illustrates the magnitude of this trouble:

Don Roderigo wallowing in his pleasures, and in them never satisfied, was shortly after surprized with a new love, which proved his destruction: the Earle *don Iulian* al this while was resident in Affrica negotiating for his master, with *Mura* [Muza] *Almanzors* Leivetenant in the Moroccoes[;] to accompany the young Queene his daughter *Florinda* was sent for; the King pursued her love, which being not able to obtaine by consent, hee performed by violence. The young Ladie full of disdain and mallice by letters to her father complained her misfortunes, praying him to take revenge of her wrong. *Don Iulian* sensible of his daughters dishonor (which reflected upon him) hastned his returne, and like a wise man smoothely covering his wounds gave the King a good accompt of his Ambassage... When the Earle had recovered his own house, hee sent for his frends and kinsmen, related unto them the particular wrong done to his daughter and the dishonor cast upon their family, wherein they were all interested: he besought their advise and ayde. At last it was concluded hee should goe into Affrica to incite *Muza*[;] *Almanzors* Leivetenant to invade Spaine, and they all protested never to lay down Arms untill their honors by revenge were repaired. *Don Iulian* presently imbarqued for Affrica himselfe, his wife, daughter, his whole familie, his moveable goods of price, where being safely arrived (according to his qualitie) he was entertained by *Mura*, to whom hee related the rape of his daughter, and the dishonor cast upon their familie, promising him if hee might be assisted in the revenge to assure unto his maister *Almanzor* the conquest of Spaine. (55–61)

Don Rodrigo's "wallowing in...pleasure" is the beginning of not only his end but of Spain's as well. Don Julian and his kinsmen's

desire for revenge, which leads them to seek the assistance of African Muslim allies, is figured as no less insatiable than Don Roderigo's desire for pleasure, as "they all protested never to lay down Arms untill their honors by revenge were repaired." From this point forward Don Julian fights side by side with Islamic forces: Don Julian will return to Spain "with 6000 foote and 300 horse, Christians and Moors" (69–70). Although Don Julian's revenge may be justified within a literary tradition of defending defiled virgins, the extent of his revenge would seem less so within the context of the history that it initiates. It is the length to which Don Julian is willing to go to enact his revenge that illustrates the excessive nature of his desire: he will only be satisfied by the downfall of an entire nation. Consequently, both Don Roderigo and Don Julian are guilty of Spain's downfall.

The Moorish occupation, nevertheless, seems to be divinely sanctioned, exemplified by the narration of a Moorish general's birthmark. Following Don Roderigo's defeat, an old woman

[]willingly taken) was brought to *Tarif* by his Sentinels; having kissed his feet, Sir said she believe what I shal tel you for I am the messanger of good news. When [I] was a child, I heard my Father who was letered often read in a [b]ooke (much esteemed by him)[.] That this Kingdome should be Conquered by the Moores; Their captaine should have on his right shoulder an hairy Moale as big as a pease: That his right arme should be longer then his left and standing upright hee might easily touch his knee, if you (said shee) have these marks then *God* hath ordained this conquest for you. My suite is, that my poore family, and my selfe may have your safegaurd, that in our bodies and goods wee may receive no prejudice; *Tarif* glad to heare this discription of himself (for hee had these signes which shee named) to satisfy *don Iulian* and the whole armie put off his cloaths; they found it true, and the poore woman went joyfully away, obtaining her suite. (73–6)

It is likely that we should question the self-interested motivation of the old woman who takes joy in fact that her family will remain safe despite, to borrow words from Florinda later in the text, "the slaughter of so many Christians, the extinguishing of Religion and the utter subversion of so flourishing a Kingdome" (115–16).

Indeed, the aftermath of *Tarif*'s victory is portrayed as having rather dismal effects:

For by the war the Countrie was meerly wasted. Then his [*Tarif*'s] care was, how to hold that hee had gotten; the way to keep it was to plan[t] Collonies, the want he found was women, to supply that

defect (the women of Arabia and Affrica being unwilling to com into Spaine) hee proclaimed the same immunities to the Christian-men and women (if they would adore *Mahomet*) as the Moores had. The poore Spanyards generally afflicted with miserie, to repaire their own fortunes; secure their lives, and gaine their free-dom; in multitudes took hold of the Proclamation; forsook their Religion gave their daughters to the Moors in marriage. (102–4)

The narrative appears sympathetic toward the “poore Spanyards.” Their situation is similar to that of Zabra’s at the beginning of the narrative: both abandon their religious affiliations to better their conditions. At the same time, the narrative also implies that the Spaniards’ forsaking of their religion and, more specifically, giving up their daughters actually allows the Moors to stay in power. It is implied that if the Spanish had not been so willing to convert to Islam and to give up their daughters, Tarif’s victory would have been short-lived. Even so, “*God* hath ordained this conquest,” according to the old woman; thus, the mole, or birthmark, which so often in romance confirms identity, legitimizes Tarif’s rule. This legitimacy is marked on the body, and though this birthmark is not inherently a marker of race and religion, it affirms Tarif’s position as a ruler regardless of his racial and religious identity.²⁴ In contention with ethnic theology, this moment from *The Life* illustrates that Christianity and European ethnicity prove not to have a monopoly on God-given legitimacy.

Miscegenation, intermarriage between Christians and Muslims, and multiple conversions produce an entangled Moorish/Spanish history: it is forever tied not only historically but also bodily through the sexual relations. Moreover, both Christians and Muslims convert throughout *The Life*. In these numerous instances, not only is religious difference ignored in the pursuit of desire (whether it is erotic desire or simply the desire to preserve oneself), but religious affiliation is changed. The proliferation of conversions in the narrative ultimately points to the problematic instability of religious identity. This history thus questions where religious identity lies: in the intangible realm of belief, in national affiliation, or in the racialized body? These questions, to be sure, were those that governed the Spanish obsession with *limpieza de sangre*, and Deborah Root has discussed how this obsession resulted from the Spanish Inquisition’s inability to confirm the orthodoxy of Christian faith of Moriscos who retained what were considered Moorish cultural practices.²⁵ *The Life*, however, makes these questions virtually unanswerable, since belief, national affiliation, and the bodies that eventually become the product of miscegenation prove to be unstable referents. It becomes impossible to

link religious identity to any of these other kinds of identity because they prove to be all-too-mutable, and the mutability of these identities themselves undermines the politics of ethnic theology.

VIRTUOUS MOORS

The inability to fix religious identity to race, nation, or the body may be the reason why *The Life* praises individuals who keep their religious conviction, especially Moors who remain faithful to Christian faith after conversion. For example, after Don Roderigo flees the conflict with Don Julian and the Moors, Zabra refuses to reconvert to Islam in order to marry the son of the king of Tunis. Instead, he converts to Christianity in order to marry her. This angers the king of Tunis, and he threatens to kill his son, Zabra, and the priest who married them unless his son reconverts to Islam. "But these yong Princes," *The Life* tells us, "neither repenting their baptisme, nor fearing the sentence of death (like constant Martyrs with the Priest that married them) were executed & their bodies cast into a ditch; but afterwards by stealth in the night buried by Christians" (97). The narrative praises the steadfastness of Zabra and the Tunisian prince by comparing them to martyrs. In fact, Zabra and the Tunisian prince are two of the only truly devout Christians in the text, with perhaps the exception of Florinda (though she takes her own life because she, too, plays a role in the overthrow of Spain). True Christianity is figured as dead in Spain: all characters who seem to truly embrace Christianity die in the text. Luna might have found this story useful for asserting that Moors could be devout Christians, while Raleigh might have found the story useful as another means to demonize Spaniards. Nevertheless, Moorish converts prove to be better Christians than the Spaniards.

Moors not only prove virtuous in their steadfastness to religious convictions but also in their good government. The text spends the second half of the history describing the virtuous rule of "the great Calipha *Almanzor*" (48) and his son, Abilqualit. This part of the history is a rather straightforward account of Almanzor's laws and habits, including his seven-day schedule: "Mondaies," for example, "were ordained to advise upon the Civill government" (160), while "upon Thursdaies hee conversed only with learned men" (166). But Almanzor receives the greatest praise when the author makes the following comment at the beginning of the discussion of this virtuous Moor: "for had he been a Christian, his equal could hardly been found, but his better impossible, wherefore not to bury so great worth in oblivion it is not impertinent to briefly say somewhat of

him" (134–5). Again, this portion of *The Life* dedicated to Almanzor is anything but brief, and the text does not shy away from making Almanzor's Islamic piety clear: for example, "Friday which is the Arabians Sabbath he spent in devotion, never missing his houres in the Mosquetaes" (149), and "he built, and finished in his life time five hundred and six principall Mosquitas" (170). More importantly, however, the text tells us of the difficulty of finding Almanzor's equal among Christians, and states that it would be impossible to find his better among them. *The Life* ends with a praise of Almanzor and his government; as he has no peers, he is presented as a model to be emulated by Christians.

A larger English interest in Almanzor becomes clear in the fact that Raleigh's is not the only translation of Luna's history that appeared in seventeenth-century England. Robert Ashley published a translation in 1627 under the title *Almansor the learned and victorious king that conquered Spaine. His life and death published by Robert Ashley, out of the librarie of the Uniuersitie of Oxford*, and Matthew Taubman published a translation in 1687 under the title *The history of the conquest of Spain by the Moors together with the life of the most illustrious monarch Almanzor: and of the several revolutions of the mighty empire of the Caliphs, and of the African kingdoms*.²⁶ There are telling differences among the translations themselves. First, Ashley's is solely dedicated to the description of Almanzor's virtuous government, a topic that takes up the second half of Raleigh's in a much abbreviated form. Second, neither Ashley nor Taubman include the history of Muhammad and Islam that Raleigh adds to his translation. The differences among these texts reveal important differences in their objectives. Unlike Ashley's and Taubman's, Raleigh's translation attempts to unify Spanish history and Islamic history. Raleigh's translation thus could be used to further demonize the Spanish, a project to which Raleigh was committed in much of his writing. *The Life* also illustrates a triangulation among the English, the Spanish, and the racial "other," here figured as the Moor, which at times allows the English to demonize the Spanish by conflating the Spaniard and the Moor, and at other times makes possible the production of a greater Spanish alterity by contrasting Spaniards with the figure of the virtuous Moor.

Even so, religious difference is too important to ignore. In his dedicatory epistle to Charles I, Robert Ashley makes his interest in *Historia verdadera* very clear. He writes, "Though the story be ancient, and your time and religion also from his much different; yet he hopeth that Vertue and Valour are never out of season: Nor the Wisdome

and Industire of any, bee hee Heathan, Mahometan, or Christian, to be disesteemed.”²⁷ Ashley must confront the important differences between Almanzor and Charles I, whom Ashley hopes will learn from the example of Almanzor. To do so, Ashley asserts the universality of “Vertue and Valour,” that it can be found in examples that are temporally distant from the present and examples that are non-Christian. Of course, there is already a precedent for doing so, as Renaissance humanists had already looked to the pagan authors of antiquity for inspiration and emulation. Ashley recalls this tradition just a little later in the dedicatory epistle, suggesting that if Christians can be inspired by figures such as Caesar, Alexander, Aristides, Cato, and Trajan, they can just as easily be inspired by a “misbeleieving Mahometan.”²⁸

Like Raleigh, Ashley finds it necessary to confront the problem that the example to be followed is a “misbelieving Mahometan,” and both remind their readers of Almanzor’s faith. Thus, even as the texts malign Islam, they foreground the virtues in Moors that are completely separate from their religious belief. Virtue is independent not only of racial identity but of religious identity as well. Thus, these English translations of Luna ultimately reveal another aspect of the English importation of Islamic “goods.” The importation of Almanzor through Raleigh, Ashley, and Taubman uncovers that seventeenth-century Englishmen also looked to Muslims for alternative, potentially better, models for governing.

NOTES

1. The epigraph is from Thomas Newton, *A notable historie of the Saracens Briefly and faithfully describying the originall beginning, continuance and successes aswell of the Saracens, as also of Turkes, Souldans, Mamalukes, Assassines, Tartarians and Sophians. With a discourse of their affaires and actes from the byrthe of Mahomet their first péeuish prophet and founder for 700 yéeres space. VVhereunto is annexed a compendious chronycle of all their yeerely exploitcs, from the sayde Mahomets time tyll this present yeere of grace. 1575. Drawn out of Augustine Curio and sundry other good authours by Thomas Newton* (London, 1575), sig. A3v. On English fears of being conquered by Muslim peoples, see Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999). He notes that while the English were colonizing the New World, they were fearful of being colonized by the Ottoman Turks (11).
2. Linda McJannet, for example, discusses the conflicting views of Turks in *The Sultan Speaks: Dialogue in English Plays and Histories about the Ottoman Turks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). She cites

Erasmus as providing a surprising example: Turks are “to a great extent half-Christian, and probably nearer true Christianity than most of our own people” (quoted in McJannet, 3). See also Emily C. Bartels’s discussion of Moors in *Speaking of the Moor: From Alcazar to Othello* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

3. The historicity of *The Life* presents problems in and of itself. Although it is written sometime after 1603 and published much later in 1637, *The Life* is arguably an “Elizabethan” text because it is written by a quintessentially Elizabethan figure. On Raleigh as the embodiment of things Elizabethan, see Stephen Greenblatt, *Sir Walter Raleigh: The Renaissance Man and His Roles* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1973). Raleigh was such an Elizabethan that he found it nearly impossible to operate within Stuart politics. He was unable to alter his long-standing anti-Spanish sentiments, sentiments that were more than appropriate during Elizabeth’s reign. He was executed in 1618 for defying James and attacking the Spanish on his second voyage to Guyana in 1616.
4. *Hic Mulier: Or, The Manish-Woman: Being a Medicine to cure the Coltish Disease of the Staggers in the Masculine-Feminines of our Times. Exprest in a brief Declamation* (1620), in *Three Pamphlets on the Jacobean Antifeminist Controversy*, ed. Barbra J. Barnes (New York: Scholars’ Facsimiles & Reprints, 1978), sig. B2v. Although this anxiety is placed in the context of condemning the “manish woman,” the barbarity of the *hic mulier* is established rhetorically by means of being linked with what is cast as a frightening and unthinkable scene of governmental chaos.
5. George Peele, *The Battle of Alcazar*, in *The Dramatic Works of George Peele*, 2 vols., ed. Charles Tyler Prouty (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1961), 1.7 and 16.
6. John Rawlins, *The Famous and Wonderful Recovery of a Ship of Bristol, Called the Exchange, from the Turkish Pirates of Argier*, in *Piracy, Slavery and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, ed. Daniel Vitkus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 119.
7. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (1989), s.v., “native” (I.1.a and II.10.a.).
8. Colin Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 10–11. The episodes of Mosaic history to which Kidd refers most specifically are the stories of the flood and the fall of the Tower of Babel, but surely stories of Abraham and his sons would fit into this scheme.
9. George Best, *The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher: In Search of a Passage to Cathay and India by the North-West Passage* (London: The Argonaut Press, 1938), 34–5.

10. On Best's relation to geohumoral theories of race, see Mary Floyd-Wilson's *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 8–9.
11. William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. E. A. J. Honigmann (Walton-on-Thames, Surrey: Thomas Nelson and Son, 1997), 1.2.99.
12. Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558–1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
13. On the differing genealogies of the sons of Noah that circulated in medieval and early modern England, see Benjamin Braude's "The Sons of Noah and the Construction of Ethnic and Geographical Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods," *William and Mary Quarterly* (1997): 103–42, esp. 108, 117.
14. John Mandeville, *The voyages and trauailes of Sir John Mandeuile knight Wherein is set downe the way to the holy Land, and to Hierusalem: as also to the lands of the great Caane, and of Prester Iohn; to Inde, and diuers other countries: together with the many and strange meruailes therein* (London, 1618).
15. Robert Linche, *An historical treatise of the travels of Noah into Europe containing the first inhabitation and peopling thereof. As also a breefe recapitulation of the kings, governors, and rulers commanding in the same, even untill the first building of Troy by Dardanus. Done into English by Richard Lynche, Gent* (London, 1601), sig. C2v.
16. *Ibid.*, sig. D2r.
17. On the relation between Luna's Morisco identity and *Historia verdadera*, see Barbara Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire, the New World, Islam, and European Identities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 111–13.
18. Another example of this racial/genealogical politics can be seen in George Owen Harry's *The genealogy of the high and mighty monarch, Iames, by the grace of God, king of great Brittain* (London, 1604), which traces Charles I back to Noah.
19. All citations for *The Life* will appear parenthetically. There are many unconventional spellings and numerous errors in pagination and punctuation in the text. I have occasionally placed corrections in brackets, in places where the meaning might otherwise be obscured. For the most part, however, I have quoted the text as is. Walter Raleigh, *The Life and Death of Mohamet, The Conquest of Spaine Together with the Rysing and Ruine of the Sarazen Empire* (London, 1637).
20. On the intersections of racial/genealogical and religious categories of identity, see, for example, Ania Loomba, "'Delicious traffick': Racial and Religious Difference on the Early Modern Stages" in *Shakespeare and Race*, eds. Catherine M. S. Alexander and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 203–24; Loomba *Shakespeare, Race and Colonialism* (Oxford: Oxford University

- Press, 2002). On the connections between race and genealogy in particular, see Loomba and Burton's introduction to *Race in Early Modern England: A Documentary Companion*, eds. Ania Loomba and Jonathan Burton (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 1–36.
21. Miguel de Luna, *Historia Verdadera Del Rey Don Roderigo*, ed. Luis F. Bernabé Pons (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada), 2001, 15. Translation mine.
 22. Later, Zabra will prove to be a model of Christian constancy: after Don Roderigo's death, she refuses to convert back to Islam.
 23. On the myriad—usually nonreligious—reasons that Christians “turned turk,” see Nabil Matar, “The Renegade in English Seventeenth Century Imagination,” *Studies in English Literature* 33 (1993): 489–505; and Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579–1624* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), 102–6.
 24. That said, there is a romance precedent that uses the birthmark to verify racial identity. In Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, Charicleia's Ethiopian origins are confirmed in part by the black birthmark on her arm.
 25. Deborah Root, “Speaking Christian: Orthodoxy and Difference in Sixteenth-Century Spain,” *Representations* 23 (1988): 132.
 26. The complete title of Taubman's 1687 translation is *The history of the conquest of Spain by the Moors together with the life of the most illustrious monarch Almanzor: and of the several revolutions of the mighty empire of the Caliphs, and of the African kingdoms / composed in Arabick by Abulcacim Tariff Abentariq, one of the generals in that Spanish expedition; and translated into Spanish by Michael de Luna, interpreter to Philip the Second; now made English*. The first part of the title bears a closer resemblance to Raleigh's title than to Ashley's. Taubman's text also contains a more detailed history of the saga between Don Sancho and Don Roderigo and between Don Roderigo and Don Julian. In addition, since Raleigh's and Ashley's texts each contain information not contained in the other, and since there is no earlier English translation of Luna's history, it appears that both authors consulted the 1606 Spanish edition. Ashley, in fact, says so explicitly in his preface, as he writes of his encounters with works written in “*strange Characters*,” including Indian, Malayan and “*Mexican*” (sig. Av). Yet, “*Amongst the rest I happen on an Arabian Historic concerning the losse of Spaine by Roderigo, King of the Goths, which by the commandment of King Phillip the Second, was translated into Spanish out of the Arabian Copie remayning in the Escorial*”; see Robert Ashley, *Almansor the learned and victorious king that conquered Spaine. His life and death published by Robert Ashley, out of the librarie of the Uniuersitie of Oxford* (London, 1627), sig. Ar.
 27. Ashley, *Almansor*, sig. §2r-3v.
 28. *Ibid.*, sig. §3r.

CHAPTER 3



PERSIAN ICONS, SHI‘A IMAMS: LIMINAL FIGURES AND HYBRID PERSIAN IDENTITIES ON THE ENGLISH STAGE

Javad Ghatta

“Before a study of the impact of Persian and Mughal Muslims on Renaissance England is conducted—a project that has yet to be undertaken¹—an investigation of the impact of the Turks and Moors of the Ottoman Empire and North Africa must be completed.”² In the same year that Nabil Matar made this statement and championed the study of early modern Anglo-Islamic interaction and literary reception in the so-called Turkish plays, Linda McJannet insisted on “[b]ringing . . . a Persian” into the scene.³ Inspired by Anthony Parr’s edition of *The Travels of the Three English Brothers*,⁴ McJannet’s article surveyed the bulk of writings on Persian matters in relation to Renaissance drama. In particular, her discussion of Robert Baron’s closet drama *Mirza* drew attention to the multiple discourses of Persia (Islamic and otherwise) embedded in the text.⁵ In what follows I attempt to endorse an awareness of multiple Islamic identities in this era against another exclusivist yet prevailing trend that, at the cost of marginalizing distinct historical identities, settles “on the designation ‘Turkish’ plays . . . as it was used in the early modern period, to signify all Muslim peoples,” including “Arabs, Moroccans, Persians, Indians, and the Muslim peoples of South East Asia.”⁶ In fact, as I shall argue, no study of individual Islamic identities and their impact on early modern English theater is satisfactory or complete without

an awareness of the interrelations between those identities and the complexities that such interrelations would create for a London audience familiar with diversified modes of religious discourse.

Although recent scholarship affirms that “English representations of Islam were complex and nuanced” in contrast to the “simplification and stereotyping” commonly emphasized since Samuel C. Chew’s *The Crescent and the Rose* (1937),⁷ there is still a strong critical tendency to overlook such diversity.⁸ This reductive approach is often based on two grounds: first, that “‘Islam’ and ‘Turkishness’ were often considered synonymous in early modern parlance”;⁹ second, that “the plays’ understanding of Islam is mediated by England’s commercial and political connections with the Ottoman Empire,” especially trade via the Levant route.¹⁰ In order to distinguish between Persian and Turkish Islamisms during the Renaissance, however, English awareness (or lack thereof) of the doctrinal implications of various Islamic denominations, such as the place of the Qur’an in Islamic religious liturgy—as opposed to, for instance, the tradition of *ahl al-bayt* (the household of the Prophet) or the principle of *furu al-din*¹¹—need to be more closely considered. Likewise, the importance of non-Levant trade routes, such as the early expeditions by the Muscovy Company along the Volga-Caspian route, call for reassessment.¹² While certain texts of the period make the distinction between Sunni and Shi’i forms of Islam, the critical trend has been to explain away the very existence of this nuance as an orientalist construction that caters to the popular imagination. In his analysis of two pseudo-conversion tracts about the Safavid shahs Isma’il and Abbas I, for example, Adam Knobler contends that “to an audience unlettered in distinctions between Sunni and Shi’a, or unaccustomed to hearing of Muslims in a favorable light, conversion to Christianity was the only reasonable explanation for cooperation.”¹³

In its representation of contemporary Persians as pro-Christian pagans hosting Robert Sherley, Middleton’s pamphlet “Sherley His Entertainment” offers an identical refashioning of the other: “It was thought fit that (the Persian himself confessing and worshipping Christ) aid should be required at the hands of the Christian princes in the Persian’s behalf, against so barbarous, so ambitious and so general an enemy.”¹⁴ Whereas such texts as Middleton’s “Sherley” partially bear witness to Knobler’s argument, other evidence points to growing English awareness regarding Persian ideologies and their liminal Islamic identity.

As I shall argue in this essay, as early as Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*, learned literature was aware of a distinct Persian Islamic identity. With

the publication of John Day, William Rowley, and George Wilkins's *The Travels of the Three English Brothers*, which dramatizes the sensational visit and embassy of the Sherley brothers to the court of Abbas I, the most prominent and internationally active of the Safavid shahs, this distinct, but hybrid, identity entered the public sphere and occupied the popular imagination of Londoners with unprecedented intensity. Furthermore, I will suggest that the great political, cultural, and ideological changes that overtook Persia with the rise of the Safavid dynasty (1502–1736) led to confusion among the very Persians who underwent massive conversion, as well as among their English contemporaries regarding Persian beliefs and worldviews in an age of transition. The survival of older belief structures and practices can partly explain the misunderstandings and corruptions of received knowledge in the so-called orientalist reconstructions of early modern Persians. Responding to allegations of the “proto-Orientalist” camp that the Islamic stereotypes were created primarily in literature, particularly in drama (as opposed to government documents, commercial exchanges, etc.),¹⁵ McJannet proposes that “the need to invent dialogue for [the Turks] in dramatic works might have permitted—even encouraged—playwrights to challenge the stereotypes present in histories and travel writing.”¹⁶ I endorse this view, for Persian characters as well as Ottoman, and I argue further that, within the span of half a century, the poetic imagination of English dramatists from Marlowe to Day and company, and ultimately to John Denham, accommodated modes of Islamic discourse hitherto unwitnessed on the London stage. As an alternative to the orientalist readings of Western reconstructions of the East, I propose that the ambiguous religious polyphony assigned to Persians during this period partly draws on a range of ideological and cultural markers not entirely irrelevant to Safavid Persia.

“YE GODS AND POWERS THAT GOVERN PERSIA”

What did Marlowe's audience make of Zenocrate's “Persian gods” invoked to “strengthen” Tamburlaine “against the Turkish Bajazeth”?¹⁷ Renaissance scholars have often designated *Tamburlaine Part I* and *Part II* as “Turkish plays” and, strangely, little critical emphasis has been put on the significance of the Persian locale and characters within the plays; after all, it is the Persian diadem that is tossed about. One reason for this lack of attention may be the ambiguity surrounding the apparently anachronistic Persian characters. Some critics have identified contemporary Persia with representations

in the play: "Clearly, the Tamburlaine plays were meant to provide pleasure in the spectacle of Tamburlaine defeating the imperial power that Knolles calls the 'present terror of the earth,' the Turk, and in subduing other Islamic potentates such as the Persian emperor and the sultan of Egypt."¹⁸ However, Marlowe provides no evidence to support the idea that the Persian emperor was one of the rival "Islamic potentates"! Indeed, Marlowe's erasure of the Persians' Islamic ideological stance is a curious shift, and one, which anticipates Middleton's Persians more than two decades later. Like Preston's Cambyses, Marlowe's Persians anachronistically identify with the Achaemenid capital, Persepolis, without exercising the corresponding religious rites or discourses. Furthermore, when Timur (Tamburlaine) began his career in 1360, the political map of Persia was a patchwork with no central government or empire in power. The only thing that the dynasties of Mongolian, Iranian, Turk, and Arab origin and the nomadic powers that ruled the realms of the former Mongol Ilkhanid dynasty had in common was the surviving Persian culture.¹⁹

Building on his audience's familiarity with ancient Persia, Marlowe curiously endows Tamburlaine with a familiar Alexandrian image of Persian kingship: "Is it not passing brave to be a king, / And ride in triumph through Persepolis?" (*ITamb* 2.5.53–4). Usumcasane's response is indicative of Tamburlaine's frame of thought throughout the play: "To be a king is half to be a god" (56). The assertion prompts the Persian Theridamas to reveal his philosophy of kingship: "A god is not so glorious as a king. / I think the pleasure they enjoy in heaven / Cannot compare with kingly joys in earth" (*ITamb* 2.5.57–9). This scene is one of several in which Tamburlaine, a Scythian shepherd by descent, seeks to affiliate himself with Marlowe's curious Persia. A few lines later, in a gesture typical of a nomadic temperament, he promises the spoil to his generals: "Why then, Theridamas, I'll first essay / To get the Persian kingdom to myself; / Then thou for Parthia, they for Scythia and Media" (*ITamb* 2.5.81–3). Tamburlaine's generosity has a limit: although all is to be shared, Persia remains for himself. It seems as if it is not Persia that is going to be annexed to Scythia, but the other way around. Two scenes later, King Tamburlaine, wearing Cosroe's crown, seeks affirmation for his new identity: "Theridamas, Techelles, and the rest, / Who think you now is king of Persia?" and they respond, "Tamburlaine! Tamburlaine!" (*ITamb* 2.7.55–7). From this moment, Tamburlaine's Persian pretensions abound: he challenges even his own godhead Mars, "the angry god of arms," over "this diadem" (*ITamb* 2.7.58–60), and he makes Zenocrate queen

of Persia (*ITamb* 5.1.489–95). In several references, it is his Persian army and crown that become the terror to the Turk (*ITamb* 3.1.45–9 and 3.3.252–60, *2Tamb* 3.5.3–7). Eventually, in Zenocrate's words, the Persian gods are summoned to help Tamburlaine against the Turk (*ITamb* 3.3.189–94). As Emily Bartels reminds us, in Part 2 “[i]t is as Persia's (and not as the emperor of Africa and the East) that he plans to demand tribute from ‘all Africa’ (2:5.1.164) to finance a citadel in Babylon.”²⁰ Finally, scolding his effeminate son Calyphas, Tamburlaine sets the conditions for whosoever wishes to “wear the crown of Persia” to bear a “mind courageous and invincible,” a head with “deepest scars” and a breast with “most wounds” (*2Tamb* 1.3.73–5).

There is evidence that Marlowe was not singular in his representation of Tamburlaine as a self-made Persian king, for Don Juan of Persia, a contemporary of Marlowe, enlists the invading Timur in the line of Persian monarchs, although not without hesitation.²¹ Moreover, at least one of Marlowe's possible sources, *De Dictis Factisque memorabilis Collectana*, written in 1509 by Baptista Flugosius, consistently promotes Tamburlaine as king of the Persians.²² According to Jonathan Burton, one important effect of Tamburlaine's repeated identification with Persians in the second part “is a disabling of Europe's simplistic identification of Persian and Turk as good and bad Muslims (left intact in the first play)—an understanding that often went so far as to transmute the Persians into opponents of Islam.”²³ An alternative reading would invite a more sophisticated awareness on the part of Europeans into the correlation of the anachronistic paganism of the Persians in Part 1 (the problem of doctrinal erasure) and the Persianization of Tamburlaine in Part 2. The question of Tamburlaine's self-fashioning as a Persian monarch in an imaginary Persia would then seem to be part of a larger textual ambiguity that possibly enclaves the protagonist's shifting ideological positions in connection with the hybrid religious formation of a contemporary Safavid Shi'a Persia.

Diverse interpretations have been offered to make sense of Tamburlaine's relation to Islamic divinity, particularly regarding the book-burning scene toward the end of Part 2. Daniel Vitkus offers a viable solution:

Tamburlaine seems to have moved from one image of Mahomet to another. His attitude toward Mahomet shifts from one of the two images of Muhammed prevalent in early modern Europe to the other: the first is the notion of Mahomet as a pagan god or idol, the deity worshipped by the “Saracens” (in the *Chanson de Roland* and other

romance narratives), and the second is the conception of Muhammed as a heretic and fraud, a renegade Christian who built a powerful new heresy in Arabia, an "imposture" allegedly cobbled together from plagiarized scraps of Judo-Christian theology.²⁴

In the context of early modern Persian-Ottoman conflicts and Tamburlaine's adopted Persian identity, however, an alternative to the first image of Muhammad as a deified prophet suggests itself: namely that of Muhammad as a Sunni godhead, a prophet overtly venerated and deified by the Turks, in contrast to the Sufi and Shi'i veneration of 'Ali over the three caliphs. Vitkus's second conception of the Prophet is reminiscent of Dante's placement of Muhammad in the ninth bolgia within the eighth circle of inferno for the heresy of schism.²⁵ Dante's punishment of 'Ali for the same heresy is likewise typical of Europeans' misunderstanding of sectarian conflict over issues of hierarchy, submission, *'ismat*, and *vilāyat*²⁶ in multiple forms of Islam. For Dante's medieval readers, unlettered in the particulars of Islamic rules of imamate and succession, 'Ali's punishment, being "cleft in the face from chin to forelock" by a devil, was symbolic of what the schismatic apostate had inflicted on the true religion (28.32–3).²⁷ Islam in this sense was taken as an offshoot or deviation of Christianity, just as Shi'i Islam was supposedly a falling away from the dominant Sunni Islam. Although Marlowe's Tamburlaine makes no reference to 'Ali or the Shi'i faith, the fact that the inscription on Timur's tomb, allegedly by his commission, drew his lineage to 'Ali must have been part of circulated knowledge. Furthermore, historical documents relating to the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth demonstrate that throughout the Turcoman and Timurid territories, particularly in the capitals, Shi'a communities predated the Safavids.²⁸ In its tacit staging of the Persians' ideological stance and the confusion surrounding Tamburlaine's shifting religious identity, Marlowe's text both epitomizes the disjointedness of pre-Safavid Persia immediately before its Islamic reformation and plays down Timur's alleged Shi'i identity.

In the words of John Gillies, *Tamburlaine* is a "poetic geographic text" in which Marlowe fused "the Renaissance wish-dream of global empire with the Timur myth."²⁹ Like Gillies's notion of the overarching geographic text, the figure of Tamburlaine himself seems to have functioned not only as an alter ego for an anti-Turk Protestant audience, but also as a prelude to dramatic representations of contemporary Persians embodied in the liminal figure of the Sophy. In spite of received knowledge affirming the decline and dissolution of

the Timurid Empire, Tamburlaine's humiliating defeat of Bajazeth and the Safavids' anti-Turkish sentiments seem to have inspired at least one of Marlowe's European sources to establish succession links between Tamburlaine and the Sophy:

Howbeit, true it is that Baptista Ignatius, a diligent searcher of ancient antiquities, reporteth that he left two sons, princes and protectors of all the countries subdued by him, reaching and extending even unto the river of Euphrates, as also their successors after them, even until the time of King Usancasan, against whom the Turk Mahomet waged sometimes battle. And the heirs of this Usancasan, as most men surmise, advanced themselves to the honour and name of the first Sophy, where now is derived the empire of Sophy, which liveth [i.e., flourishes] this day as sworn enemy to the Turk.³⁰

Perhaps in Tamburlaine's seemingly conflicting identities as Scythian/Persian and Muslim/anti-Turk, Marlowe, albeit unwittingly, was hatching a convenient prototype for the liminal image of the contemporary shahs of Persia. Abbas I, whose early accession to the throne coincided with the staging of the largely popular *Tamburlaine Part 1* by the Admiral's Men in 1587, was soon to emerge as a particularly poignant example for the representation of this liminality. Although a Shi'i Muslim by faith, he came from a land still deeply rooted in Zoroastrian customs; he who was begotten from a Georgian Christian mother and was raised in an age of Sunni hegemony, though Sufi dervish by lineage, emerged as a king with a practical policy for governing a nation.³¹ As such, the ambiguous hybridity registered by Marlowe's popular play and its protagonist seems to have anticipated and inspired the advent of the complex Safavid phenomenon on the English stage. To any discerning member of a late sixteenth-century London theater audience, the succession of Marlowe's Scythian-turned-Persian-turned-anti-Turk by the hybrid image of a "native," anti-Turk, Persian, Muslim monarch may have seemed a paradoxical advancement in any emergent or imagined project of empire. However, by 1607, when Shah Abbas made his appearance on the English stage, the notorious Anthony Sherley had already fallen out of favour with the queen for his part as Essex's agent in negotiating a Persian-Western Christian alliance against the Ottomans and for his role as the shah's emissary to the courts of Western Europe.³² In the play that celebrates the Sherleys' exploits, the Persians are not only assigned a more nuanced Islamic religious discourse, namely that of institutionalized Shi'i Islam, but are also given hitherto unprecedented polyphony.

“BY MORTUS ALI AND OUR PERSIAN GODS”

At the beginning of Day, Rowley, and Wilkins's *Travels of the Three English Brothers* (1607), the chorus appears on stage as a prologue in the attire of Fame, as Parr's textual apparatus informs us.³³ To a perceptive audience, the favorable device of “Fama Bona” and the extensive metaphor of the cook “dressing a fowl” in the text of the prologue not only function as an apology for any deviation from historical fact—“the loss of feathers and the gain of sauce”—but they also commit the authors to some taste of “truth.”³⁴ Published a few years after the play, Middleton's panegyric on Robert Sherley employs a similar device in the metaphor of the text as a “robe”: “Reader, this Persian robe, so richly woven with the praises only of Sir Robert Sherley (thy countryman) comes to thee at a low price, though it cost him dear that wears it, to purchase so much fame, as hath made it so excellent.”³⁵ The economy of conversion and hybridity seems to govern both texts as they oscillate between entertaining travel genre and true report, a generic hybridity that also corresponds to two extremes: namely, the fictional reconstruction of the other and its factual representation. The multiple ideological discourses of the Persians (and, by extension, of the Europeans) provide sufficient grounds for a counterargument to the so-called orientalist hypothesis. In this approach, not all misrepresentations of Islamic others in the text are perceived as “the dressing on the fowl.” In spite of its familiar corruptions and/or misrepresentations of historical facts, typical of representations of exotic others on the London stage, this play is an early example of Western popular awareness of the multiple identities that coexisted in Safavid Persia.

Perhaps no other English play with Muslim characters has given such strong voice to the ancient Persian traditions of Mazdaism or Zoroastrianism, and not without cause. Although the Safavid dynasty, especially in its later years, suppressed traditional religious minorities—Zoroastrians and Jews in particular were widely persecuted in Isfahan, Yazd, and Shiraz—there was, and still is, sufficient cultural evidence to trace Mazdaism's lasting influence on the Persians' socio-political-cultural identities. Apart from classical texts, early modern English travelers to Persia could have received knowledge of and exposure to the old religion through several mediums in spite of the forced Islamicization of the populace.³⁶ From the Zoroastrian symbols embedded in the Islamic architecture of Shah Abbas I's capital, Isfahan, to Nowruz, the official celebration of the Persian new year at the advent of spring and several other festivities, to the flags and

emblems of the Safavid dynasty bearing the image of the sun as centerpiece, Mazdaist images and symbols had significant presence in the Shi'i regime that found it useful to associate itself with the power of the ancient Persian monarchs. Contemporary histories testify that the Safavid shah Abbas I was fond of promoting the ancient Persian rites; he would tenaciously observe them even when they overlapped with significant Islamic events, although with more reverence to the latter. For instance, in 1611 he decided not to entirely forsake the new-year festivities when Nowruz coincided with 'Ashura—the anniversary of Husayn ibn 'Ali's martyrdom in 680.³⁷

In *The Travels*, particularly in the Persian-English-Ottoman exchanges of scene 2, the dramatists introduce the major proto-Mazdaist images of the sun and the moon to establish the discursive regime for the pagan Persian identity. Assured of his standing before the king after the victory of the Great Turk's army and the Sophy's promise to hear him out, a promise that he solemnizes by swearing to "the eye of heaven" (2.162), Sir Anthony raises the issue of an Anglo-Persian alliance against the Turk. The Sophy's question, "What profit may this accrue to us?" (2.187) prompts the following exchange:

Sir Anthony. Honour to your name, bliss to your soul.
Halibeck. Dishonour unto both, my sovereign
 Shall you, whose empire for these thousands of years,
 Have given their adoration to the sun,
 The silver moon and those her countless eyes
 That like so many servants wait on her,
 Forsake those lights? Perpetually abide
 And kneel to one that lived a man and died? (2.188–95)

What follows is a vigorous conversion debate between the advocates of "that glorious lamp" on the one side and the Christian on the other (2.202). This scene not only resembles the debates the Safavid kings attended, in which their *sadrs* and prized Shi'a ulama' from Jabal 'Amil performed feats of logic and Islamic philosophy, but also echoes Zoroastrian catechism textbooks and their *Rivayat* sources in substance in their veneration of the sun and the moon as *qibla* for prayer for generations of Persians: "In the morning when the sun is rising, face him [the sun], at night, face fire, and if there is no fire, face the moon."³⁸ What is striking in this scene is not the anachronism of Mazdaism in the Persian court, but the precision with which the revered Mazdaist symbols, the sun and the moon, are demystified for an English audience. Halibeck, the Husayn 'Ali Beg of *Don Juan of Persia*, plays the role of the religious courtier/minder bringing out his

best polemic. Though he anachronistically champions the Zoroastrian cause, his standard argument for the sun and the moon corresponds to Zoroastrian liturgy preserved in some of the most important *Yashts* (invocations) of *Khordah-Avesta* (Little Avesta): "Praise be to Ahura-Mazda . . . praise to Mithra who possesses wide pastures, praise to the Sun with swift steeds, praise to the Eyes of Ahura-Mazda."³⁹ Similarly, reverence to the moon in the form of praise to "the container of the seed of the bull" takes up one whole *Yashta* in the ensuing *Mâh-Nyâyis* (praise to the moon).⁴⁰ As these hymns to the lower deities reveal, the praise of the sun always invokes Mithra as the possessor of wide pastures, and its cooperation with the moon summons the fertility motif simultaneously reflected in the genesis myth of the *Teachings of the Magi*⁴¹ and Halibeck's erudition on the distinctive powers of the sun and the moon:

Our king of day our fair queen of nights
Walk over us with their perpetual lights,
To see we should not want and to defend us.
Her rain with dews doth all our fruits adorn
Which in his rise are offered to his throne.
He warms, she waters; and to them as due
Our knees we give, all other gods eschew. (2.215–21)

Striking in this gendered personification is the cooperative function of the deities in bringing about the fecundity of the earth. The incarnation intimately replicates Zoroastrian teachings on an early-seventeenth-century English stage invoking the symbolic interpretive relationship of the deities in certain Zoroastrian customs: as the *Pigani* custom of marking the forehead of men and women, which "signifies the gravitational force (friendship) between the sun and the moon described in Khorshed Nyaish . . . [where] the sun is seen as a fructifying agent, giving life, whereas the moon is seen as a conceiving agent receiving the rays of the sun."⁴²

To the perceptive audience, the Zoroastrian imagery of the debate scene would have appeared as already foregrounded in the Sophy's liminal if not pluralistic confession of scene 1: "Next Mortus Ali, and those deities / To whom we Persians pay devotion, / We do adore thee . . ." (1.87–9). The juxtaposition and overlapping of Shi'a, Zoroastrian, and Christian identities in this statement would have created a troubling awareness of the Persians' doctrinal fragmentary reconstructions among certain members of the audience. This scene, in turn, would have been reminiscent of another familiar anti-Turk's

doctrinal confusion, that of Tamburlaine. At the latest, by 1630 details of Zoroastrian scriptures such as the sun and the moon symbolism in the *Yasna* as “God’s two witnesses”—“the eyes of heaven” in *The Travels*—were made available to the public by the London print industry with the publication of Henry Lord’s *A display of two forraigne sects in the East Indies*.⁴³ In contrast to traditional European accounts of Zoroastrianism, Lord’s second chapter claimed to be a direct translation from a Persian copy of *Zundavastwa*. In the play the anachronistic Mazdaist discourse simultaneously anticipates Middleton’s Persian robe in his preface to “Sherley His Entertainment,” in which he criticizes the Persians’ “religion which they have observed of old, doing worship and reverence in their upright zeal to the Sun, the Moon, Venus, Fire, Earth, Water, and Winds, erecting neither altars nor statues, but in open fields offering their sacrifices, which sacrifices were superstitious and full of idle ceremonies too tedious to be here rehearsed.”⁴⁴

In addition to Zoroastrian discourse, what these previously mentioned texts have in common is their investment in the motif of conversion. Especially in the play, the authors exercise various degrees of religious tolerance in their depiction of the exchanges between the Sophy and the Sherleys. Eventually the free play of discursive voices enhances the motif of conversion at the center of the Western imperialistic discourse; it also enhances the release of interpretive tensions within the dramatic action, perhaps not necessarily beyond the grasp of certain members of the audience. On the one hand, Sherley’s drama of conversion intended for early modern English audiences succeeds when Calimath and Halibeck’s “resistance to Christian aid and the deliverance . . . looks blindly perverse,” as Parr suggests.⁴⁵ On the other hand, Halibeck’s savvy recognition of the ideological discontents of the Persian-Christian alliance brings the Western imperialist discourse down on its head. For through this debate scene emerges the silent paradox of Anthony Sherley’s textual participation in the Safavid persecution of a Persian religious other: namely the minority Zoroastrians of the kingdom.⁴⁶

Like the debate scene in *The Travels*, the conversion discourse prevalent in the circulating accounts of Shah Abbas I functioned on two levels. On the one hand, it negotiated the European ideal of a Muslim king joining the Christian league against the Turk, not just in arms but also in faith. On the other, it demonstrated the anxiety and political-religious allegations surrounding the conversion of prominent Europeans, the now-converted Catholic Robert Sherley included. According to *The Chronicle of the Carmelites*, “hoping

much from the alleged indications of Abbas I's personal inclination towards the Christian religion, [from] tales woven round activities and talk of the monarch wrongly understood, or greatly exaggerated by those irresponsible observers," Pope Clement VIII communicated and dispatched a number of briefs to the shah and his court, one of which was addressed to the ruler's Georgian consort, mother of Safi Mirza, dated February 24, 1601.⁴⁷ Quoting St. Paul on the infidel husband's sanctification by the faithful wife, the pope also acknowledged the ancient flourishing of Christianity in pre-Islamic Persia.⁴⁸ The fact that the Carmelite friars were, in spite of their differences with the local Armenians of Julfa, welcomed by the shah and allowed to establish their mother house in the new capital—the first of its kind in the East for the missionary work of the "Reformed" Order⁴⁹—testifies to Abbas I's religious tolerance and his good rapport with Christians.⁵⁰ Of course, such tolerance normally excluded the Sunnis as the archrivals.

In addition to the prominent display of Mazdaist imagery, *The Travels* strongly identifies the Persians with Shi'i Islam in contradistinction to the Sunni Ottomans, particularly toward the second half of the play. The standard marker for this opposition is the practice during the Safavid era of defaming the first three caliphs. Several Safavid Shi'a clerics promoted this defamation ritual, among them "Mir Husayn [the maternal grandson of al-Karaki, the leading scholar during Isma'il II's reign] clearly suggests the interdependence of 'dissociation from' and 'cursing of' Sunnite figures in Shiite faith."⁵¹ An example of this dissociation can be found early in scene 7:

Persian. Join Mortus Ali then with Mahomet,
That slew your prophets Omar and Uthman,
And by a snowy camel went to heaven,
And yet you shall find grace in Persia. (7.20–3)

The reference to the sectarian strife over the right of succession to the caliphate provides another opportunity to display Shi'i-Sunni conflict in the play. In line with the play's larger conversion theme, and a few lines before this pre-execution conversion scene, Robert Sherley seems to have little care for "Christian clemency" as he plays the "Persian substitute" (7.14–15). Clearly, the Englishman's promotion of the Persian deity, whom he now pretends to "adore," is justified because it is a conspicuous dissociation from the Turkish religion. The passage is also significant for its rare juxtaposition of competing contemporary (mis)conceptions of Safavid Shi'i Islam; whereas

Sherley's deification of "Mortus Ali" entails a denial of Muhammad, his Persian comrade offers a more authentic perspective of the Shi'i faith (albeit concocting yet another historical fabrication) by urging the Turkish prisoners not to renounce the Prophet but to join 'Ali in his worship, should they desire to live and win grace in Persia.⁵²

Probably more important than the identity games played among the king's minions is the paradoxical convergence of religious discourses embodied in the liminal character of the Sophy himself. In *The Travels*, the Sophy often swears by "Mortus Ali" and "other" Persian gods and deities (1.87–8, 11.1, 11.17).⁵³ While such verbal juxtaposition is paradoxical and ahistorical, it seems to reflect the subconscious, ideological convergence of pagan and Shi'i elements in the Safavid monarch as the absolute head of the body politic, a convergence possibly aimed at promoting the providential rise of the Safavids to divine rule in an ancient land. Roger Savory has identified three bases for the Safavid shahs' claims to legitimacy. The first was *farr*, or "kingly glory," which was "the ancient theory of the divine right of Persian kings."⁵⁴ The second was "the claim of the Safavid shahs to being the representative of the Mahdi" by descent from the seventh Shi'i imam, Musa al-Kazim.⁵⁵ The messianic role adopted by the shah through this claim made any opposition to him a sin; he himself would be said to enjoy *'ismat*, or infallibility. The third was the office of *irshad*: "The Safavid shahs were able to insist on the absolute obedience of their Sufi followers by virtue of the relationship known as 'pir-muridi'."⁵⁶ No wonder the ancestral claims of Shah Isma'il, the founder of the Safavid kingdom, were widely circulated to connect the king through his father to the Prophet Muhammad via the seventh imam, as well as to the Sassanian kings via Husayn, revered grandson of the Prophet who had married Shahr-Banu, daughter of Yazdagird, the last of the Sassanians. Furthermore, as Uruch Beg relates, Isma'il boasted that he sprang from the loins of Persian kings through his mother Martha, the daughter of Uzun Hassan.⁵⁷ Thanks to the Safavid propaganda machine, bolstered by the group of Shi'a scholars imported from Lebanon's Jabal 'Amil to theorize the political and religious exigencies of the Shah's rule, the Safavid sovereign was received among his subjects and others as a potentate fit to oppose the Turk. Indeed, this was the quintessential characteristic of Safavid Shi'i doctrine at its inception. Out of the legitimacy argument—the Sophy having been derived from both the ancient Persian kings and the descendants of 'Ali—was born what religious scholars have called institutionalized Shi'i Islam as part of Safavid providential history. Traditionally, the history of Shi'i Islam

has been divided into two eras: one that continued from the first *hijra* century (seventh century CE) to the advent of the Safavid period in the sixteenth century in the Western calendar. The *alavi* Shi'i of this age has been called the "Islam of progress," as opposed to Sunni Islam, or the "Islam of institution"; this is the age of reform and progress of Shi'i Islam. The second period extends from the time of the Safavids to the present and is recognized as the period in which the Shi'i Islam of "progress" became one of "institution" itself.⁵⁸

Informed by proto-Iranian discourses and in its Persian royal attire, it is this emergent mode of Shi'i Islam that captured the English popular imagination through numerous historical accounts, travel narratives, and plays. Whereas at the turn of the century the Franciscan friar accompanying Anthony Sherley had put on Persian robes to avoid the enmity of Lutherans in Stade (Germany), as related by the Shi'i Catholic, Uruch Beg,⁵⁹ a few decades later it was John Denham who dressed his political allegory of Charles I in Abbas's robes. Recalling the now familiar image of Middleton's hybrid "famous English Persian,"⁶⁰ Denham's *The Sophy* could now in its reversal negotiate the political facts of an England at the verge of collapse. In the words of Theodore Howard Banks, it was not difficult "to see in the Persian king, Charles cut off from his people and surrounded by his 'evil counsellors'."⁶¹ If for Marlowe's audience Persians in their nostalgic anachronism signified England's imperialistic dreams, for Denham's elite and popular audiences alike, the dire state of Persia depicted in the play anticipated a collapsing empire closer to home. Contrary to Marlowe's remote Persians, however, Denham's familiar figures seemed only remotely Persian.

To conclude, the period between 1587 and 1642 can be registered as a turning point in the cultural and literary history of England in terms of its reception and awareness of an emerging Islamic other, Shi'i Persia. This time frame was not arbitrarily chosen. From Marlowe's Elizabethan *Tamburlaine Part I* to Denham's Caroline *The Sophy*, the English image of the Persian experienced continuous adjustments. While before *Tamburlaine* the standard Persian stereotype was a classical pagan figure, inherited through Roman and Greek texts, after Marlowe's play the London stage, haunted by the expansionist Ottoman Empire and inspired by *Tamburlaine*'s historical defeat of the latter, was compelled to reassess an emergent yet ambiguous Islamic rival. Subsequently, in *The Travels of the Three English Brothers*, English imperial and messianic projects converged in a subtext of multiple hybrid identities and liminal figures unique to Safavid Persia. The play captured many of the sociopolitical exigencies that

energized the emergence of Persia as a powerful, independent Islamic state, one that invested in the legacies of ancient Persia in order to define itself in contradistinction to Ottoman Sunni hegemony. When the London playhouses were closed in 1642, no such Turkish-Islamic hegemony dominated the theaters, and familiar Persian characters trafficked the scenes of English plays much like fellows at home.

NOTES

1. I am indebted to Karen Robertson for her commentary on an early draft of this work prepared for the Shakespeare Association of America annual meeting held in Washington D.C. in 2009. On the same occasion, Daniel Vitkus and Jonathan Burton kindly brought significant contemporary texts to my attention. Mehdi Keyvani has cordially offered advice on Safavid secondary sources in Farsi, and Randall Martin, my doctoral supervisor, has contributed with his ever-erudite questions. This essay owes much to the editorial and scholarly suggestions of Bernadette Andrea and Linda McJannet. I further would like to acknowledge Setareh Safavi, lecturer at Sheikhbahae University, Isfahan, Iran. She has been the inspiration behind this scholarly interest from the beginning.
2. Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 4–5.
3. Linda McJannet, “Bringing in a Persian,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 12 (1999): 236–67.
4. John Day, William Rowley, and George Wilkins, *The Travels of the Three English Brothers in Three Renaissance Travel Plays*, ed. Anthony Parr (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 55–135.
5. McJannet, “Bringing in a Persian,” 239.
6. Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579–1624* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), 264.
7. *Ibid.*, 11.
8. And this in spite of illuminating analyses such as Emily C. Bartels, “East of England: Imperialist Self-Construction in *Tamburlaine, Parts 1 and 2*” in *Spectacles of Strangeness: Imperialism, Alienation, and Marlowe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 52–81; contrasting Edward Said’s *Orientalism* with *La Renaissance Orientale* of Raymond Schwab (1950), Bartels makes the argument for an exemplary diversified perception of the East by the English as distinct from the experience of Africa and the New World.
9. Burton, *Traffic*, 13.
10. *Ibid.* At the risk of discounting “the possibility of discursive regimes specific to Saracens, Turks, and Persians, in the English imagination,” Benedict Robinson takes a similar approach in *Islam and Early Modern English Literature: The Politics of Romance from Spenser to*

- Milton* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) with respect to the Persian Islamic figures in Anthony Munday's *Zeluato*. Robinson further insists that all of these terms of difference emerge out of "a structuring representation most powerfully associated with the 'Saracen' of medieval romance" (33).
11. That is, the subsidiary practices of religion such as *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) or *salat* (the daily prayer); not *usūl al-dīn* or the fundamental principles: *tawhīd* or oneness of Allah, *ʿadālat* or justice, *nūbūwwat* or prophethood, *imamate* or leadership, and *qīyāmat* or the Day of Judgment.
 12. For some early expeditions via this route, see Samuel. C. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose* (1937; reprint. New York: Octagon Books, 1965), 205–17.
 13. Adam Knobler, "Pseudo-Conversions and Patchwork Pedigrees: The Christianization of Muslim Princes and the Diplomacy of Holy War," *Journal of World History* 7.2 (1996), 197.
 14. Thomas Middleton, "Sir Robert Sherley His Entertainment in Cracovia," eds. Daniel Vitkus and Jerzy Limon, in *Thomas Middleton: Collected Works*, gen. eds. Gary Taylor, John Lavagnino, and John Jowett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 674.
 15. Exemplary of this critical stance is Richmond Barbour's perspective in *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576–1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Barbour uses the accounts of the Indian journeys of Coryat and Roe to demonstrate that, despite increased actual contact with the East, "London's literary and theatrical cultures continued to purvey stereotypic visions of Turks and Moors. This happened not only because domestic absorptions held considerable momentum, dramatic plots enjoyed demonic antagonists, and eastern ventures required ongoing levies of capital and personnel; but also because traveler's reports were crafted to domestic purposes" (194).
 16. Linda McJannet, *The Sultan Speaks: Dialogue in English Plays and Histories about the Ottoman Turks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), ix.
 17. Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great*, ed. J. S. Cunningham (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), 3.3.189–91. Future references will be given parenthetically.
 18. Daniel J. Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 50.
 19. The three regional powers controlling larger portions of former Persia during Timur's invasion were the Kartid kings of Herat; the Muzaffarid dynasty in central Iran, Fars, and Kerman; and the last Mongol pretenders to the Ilkhanid throne in Mazandaran. See Beatrice Forbes Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 11.

20. Bartels, *Spectacles*, 76.
21. Uruch Beg (1560–1604) was the first in rank of the four secretaries who accompanied Shah Abbas's ambassadors Husayn 'Ali Beg and Sir Anthony Sherley to the European courts in 1599. A native of Persia and a Shi'i Muslim, his conversion to Catholicism in Valladolid was sponsored by Queen Margaret, second cousin to the Spanish king Philip III and granddaughter to the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I. Uruch Beg was renamed Don Juan of Persia upon his baptism, as he relates in chapter 8, book 3 of his *Relaciones*, a personal diary written in Persian on the journey to Europe. First published in Spanish in 1604, it offered a unique inside view of the court of Abbas and provided recent political history of Safavid Persia to Europeans. The *Relaciones* was first translated and published in English as *Don Juan of Persia* in 1926. See Guy Le Strange, trans. and ed., *Don Juan of Persia: A Shi'ah Catholic 1560–1604* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1926), 96.
22. Vivien Thomas and William Tydeman, eds., *Christopher Marlowe: The Plays and Their Sources* (London: Routledge, 1994), 125.
23. Burton, *Traffic*, 87.
24. Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 50–1.
25. As Charles S. Singleton states in his edition of Dante's *Inferno*, "There was a belief current in the Middle Ages that Mohammed was an apostate Christian, perhaps even a cardinal." See Charles S. Singleton, trans. and ed., *The Divine Comedy: Inferno and Commentary* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 2.503.
26. In Islamic terminology, *'ismat* and *vilāyat* stand for infallibility and divine authority, respectively.
27. Singleton, *Divine Comedy*, 1.295.
28. The circumstances of the authorship of *Ruwwzat al-Shuhada fi Maqatil Ahl al-bayt* by Kamil al-Din Husayn ibn-'Ali Beihaqi-i Sabzivari (known as Va'iz Kashifi) support this view. This book was commissioned by Murshid al-Dula' Abdullah as a guide to the rituals commemorating Husayn's martyrdom on 'Ashura', a significant day in the Shi'i calendar. See Mansur Sifatgul, *Sakhtar-i Nahad va Andishih-i Dini dar Iran-i Asr-i Safavi: Tarikh-i Tahavulat-i Diniyy-i Iran dar Sadih'haiyy-i Dahum ta Davazdahum-i Hijri-i Qamari*. [*Religious Institution and Thought during the Safavid Iran: The History of the Development of the Religious Structure in Iran 16th-18th Century*] (Tehran: Mu'awsisih Khadamat-i Farhangi-i Rasa, 1381 [2002]), 136.
29. John Gillies, "Marlowe, the Timur Myth, and the Motives of Geography," in *Playing the Globe: Genre and Geography in English Renaissance Drama*, eds. John Gillies and Virginia Mason Vaughan (London: Associated University Presses, 1998), 226.
30. The excerpt is from *The Forest or Collection of Histories* by Thomas Fortescue (1571), a translation of *Silva de Caria Leción* by Pedro

- Mexía (1542). According to the modern editors, Marlowe may have read the Spanish original or Fortescue's (1571) and/or Whetstone's (1586) English adaptations (74). Thomas and Tydeman, *Christopher Marlowe*, 89–90.
31. This is not to say that Abbas I was the first of the Safavid kings who carried these traits. Early in the century, his less tolerant ancestor, the founder of the Safavid dynasty, Isma'il I, had successfully defined the Safavid political agenda: i.e., the promotion of the Shi'a cause in the ancient land as part of the unification project of Persia, a project that his grandson was to bring to fruition.
 32. D. W. Davies, *Elizabethans Errant: The Strange Fortunes of Sir Thomas Sherley and His Three Sons* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), 139.
 33. The allegorical figure Fame is missing from the quarto. Parr seems either to accept A. H. Bullen's emendation on this matter or to infer that the chorus's appearance as Fame in the epilogue of the Q text should counterbalance the prologue. See Day, et al., *The Travels*, 59 n to l.0.1. The section heading is spoken by the Sophy actor: *ibid*, 112, (11.17). Future references will be given parenthetically.
 34. *Ibid.*, 5–15.
 35. Middleton, "Sir Robert Sherley," 673.
 36. Even today the predominant Iranian Shi'i identity is not devoid of familiar Zoroastrian traditions and cultural practices. While the causes of the resurgence of Zoroastrian values and rites among Iranian Muslim communities remain to be studied, reports of tacit "re-conversion" have been circulated. For one such instance and a brief historical survey of the challenges facing Zoroastrians in Iran, see Richard Foltz, "Zoroastrians in Iran: What Future in the Homeland?," *The Middle East Journal* 65:1 (2011): 73–84.
 37. In 1611, the twenty-fifth year of Abbas's reign, when the first day of spring happened on Friday the sixth of Muharram 1020 (AH), Shah Abbas first performed the grieving rituals for the martyred imam, Husayn ibn 'Ali, and then, as Iskandar Beg Munshi has related in *Tarikh-i 'Alam Aray-i Abbasi* [*The World-adorning History of Abbas*], he attended the festivities in *Naqsh-i Jahān* square on the following days. See Iskandar Beg Munshi, "Book 2," in *Tarikh-i 'Alam Aray-i Abbasi* [*The World-adorning History of Abbas*], ed. Shahrudi, (Tehran: Tawlu' and Sirus, 1985). 617–18. For an English translation of this contemporary source, see Iskandar Munshi, *History of Shah Abbas the Great*, 2 vols., trans. Roger Savory (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1979).
 38. Quoted from the *Rivayat of Kamdin Shapur*, on which see Dastur Erachji Sohrabji Meherjirana, *A Guide to the Zoroastrian Religion: A Nineteenth Century Catechism with Modern Commentary*, trans. and eds. Firoze M. Kotwal and James W. Boyd (Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1982), 44.

39. Arthur Henry Bleeck, trans., *Avesta: The Religious Books of the Parsees; From Spiegel's German Translation of the Original Manuscripts*, 3 vols. (Hertford, UK: S. Austin for M. H. Cama, 1864), 3: Khordah-Avesta, 6.
40. Ibid., III.9.
41. R. C. Zaehner, *The Teachings of the Magi: A Compendium of Zoroastrian Beliefs* (New York: Allen and Unwin, 1956), 77.
42. Ramiyar Karanjia, "Understanding Parsi Customs in the Light of Zoroastrian Religion," 10, <http://tenets.zoroastrianism.com/pcustm33.html>, accessed February 8, 2009.
43. Henry Lord, *A display of two forraigne sects in the East Indies, Book II: the Religion of the Persees* (London, 1630), sig. T4^r.
44. Middleton, "Sir Robert Sherley," 676.
45. Day, *The Travels*, 75, n to ll. 196–8.
46. Although, as Pietro della Valle relates, Shah Abbas had in 1608 ordered the settlement of a great number of *Gaurs* (vernacular for *gabr*, an insulting term for Zoroastrians) from Kerman and Yazd around his capital as laborers, by 1624 forced conversions and massacres of the faithful, including Dasturan dastur, had raised concern and disappointment, as reflected in the letters written to the Parsis of India. For relevant documentation, see Mary Boyce, "Under the Safavids and Mughals" in *Zoroastrians: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), 177, 181–2.
47. *A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia and the Papal Mission of the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries*, 2 vols. (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1939), 1.84.
48. Ibid., 1.88.
49. Ibid., 2.724.
50. Abbas did not always treat Christians with favor. There are several accounts of forced conversions and persecutions that coincided with and may have been related to the Hormuz conflict in 1622. Two instances of persecutions targeting the Armenians of Chaharmahal and Julfa predated the tragic persecution of the five Persian converts who had been baptized at the Carmelite convent in Isfahan during the previous four years. The new prior of the Carmelite convent summarizes the situation: "We are in the country of the greatest tyrant the Church has had since it began until our own times: for the methods he adopts are taken from hell. Since our arrival he has had enslaved 39 villages, and had the wives of Christians given to Muslims, and those of Muslims to Christians . . . things that may not be done according to the Qur'an, say his Persian and Muslim luminaries" (Ibid., 1.255–8).
51. Rula Jurdi Abisaab, *Converting Persia: Religion and Power in the Safavid Empire* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004), 47.
52. Namely, that the Prophet Muhamamd, or his cousin and son-in-law 'Ali, slew two of the revered caliphs who in fact succeeded him.

53. *Mortus Ali* is an anglicization of *Mortaza Ali*. *Mortazā* (adj.) (arc.) accepted, elected, chosen. See Hasan Anvari, ed., *Farhang-i Buzurg-i Sukhan* [*The Great Sukhan Dictionary*], 8 vols (Tehran: Intisharat-i Sukhan, 1381, [2002]), 7.6855. ‘Ali: ‘Ali ibn-abi-Tālib, fourth of the caliphs born at Mecca c. 600 CE, was Muhammad’s son-in-law. ‘Ali became the first Shi‘i imam and was called *Mortaza*, as Allah was said to be pleased in his being chosen as the Prophet’s successor.
54. Middleton’s Persians also benefit from this unbroken royal pedigree: “For their kings, the golden line of them is drawn out of one family” (“Sir Robert Sherley” 676).
55. For one such contemporary claim, consult the official genealogy in the indispensable royal history, Abbas’s own chronicle (note 37): Munshi, “Book 1,” in *Tarikh-i ‘Alam Aray-i Abbasi*, 9.
56. Roger Savory, “The Safavid Era,” in *Expectation of the Millennium: Shi‘ism in History*, eds. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Hamid Dabashi, and Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 169.
57. Le Strange, *Don Juan*, 107.
58. Ali Shariati, *Tashaiyyu‘-i Alavai va Tashaiyyu‘-i Safavi* [*Alavi Shi‘ism and Safavid Shi‘ism*], vol. 9, *Majmu‘ah-i asar* [*Collected Works*], 35 vols. (Tehran: Intisharat-i Tashayyu‘, 1359 [1980]), 9.37.
59. Le Strange, *Don Juan*, 265.
60. Middleton, “Sir Robert Sherley,” 677.
61. John Denham, *The Poetical Works*, 2nd ed., ed. Theodore Howard Banks (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Archon Books, 1969), 47.

CHAPTER 4



THE TARTAR KING'S MASQUE AND PERFORMANCES OF IMPERIAL DESIRE IN MARY WROTH'S *THE COUNTESS OF MONTGOMERY'S URANIA*

Bernadette Andrea

As Wroth scholars have increasingly recognized,¹ the overarching narrative of her prose romance, *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*, in both its published first part of 1621 and the equally substantial unpublished second part, is driven by the desire of the dynasty at its core to establish a “universal Christian empire” covering Eurasia.² This end is accomplished through the premodern mode of European expansionism: marital alliances combined with military interventions. The marriage of the Tartar king Rodomandro and the Greek princess Pamphilia, who becomes queen of her eponymous realm in Asia Minor, unites “East” and “West” under Western Christian hegemony without demanding the exclusion of racialized “others,” as would subsequent anglocentric models of empire. The Tartar king's leadership is crucial to the military campaigns in Central Asia and Persia that propel the narrative. They are meant to secure both regions, only implicitly Islamized in the romance, for Western Christian and Christian(ized) Eastern rulers. This imaginary resolution of the real conditions of imperialist expansion within Eurasia during the early decades of the seventeenth century, with the Safavid Persians dominating Central Asia and the Ottomans a significant

force in central Europe and the Mediterranean, draws attention to discourses of difference related to English colonial efforts in the Americas that targeted Native Americans and Africans.³ It also shows how these discourses resonated with earlier English ventures in Central Asia involving Tartars and Persians, which Wroth as a member of the Sidney family would have known well.⁴ Simultaneously, Rodomandro, a black-and-white character who hails from the farthest reaches of Central Asia, evokes conventions of “racially ambiguous, both black- and white-skinned” heroines and heroes familiar from classical Greek romance.⁵ Rodomandro is thus overdetermined by multiple, and sometimes conflicting, models of race, religion, and empire as they are articulated with complexly layered genres such as romance.

To effect this character’s inclusion into the overarching imperial project of the *Urania*, as I shall argue here, Wroth focuses on the means by which he ingratiate himself with the Western imperialist dynasty at the heart of the romance. He does so by negotiating the “strategies of exclusion and inclusion” characteristic of the Jacobean masque form.⁶ In particular, Rodomandro enacts a performance of difference that highlights the liminal moment between his initial exclusion from and his eventual inclusion within the dynastic imperial project that drives the narrative. This successful performance, which, as Wroth emphasizes, pleased the cosmopolitan European court to which it was directed, leads Pamphilia to marry him instead of her “first love,” the Holy Roman Emperor in the romance, Amphilanthus.⁷

Yet, it also instantiates what Robert Young, examining a more fully realized anglocentric discourse of empire, identifies as “colonial desire,” or “a covert but insistent obsession with transgressive, inter-racial sex, hybridity, and miscegenation.”⁸ I propose that Wroth’s rendering of Rodomandro, situated at a transitional moment for what we more accurately might call early modern English conceptualizations of “imperial desire,” must be read through the historical vector of competing empires in “the greater Western world.”⁹ As Daniel Goffman indicates, these included the Ottomans and involved the Safavid Persians from the sixteenth century through the first decades of the seventeenth century. But Wroth’s rendering must also be read as part of a history of competing forms, with the masque functioning in early-seventeenth-century England as an important vehicle for negotiating difference within a Jacobean court that deployed residual and emergent models of empire to achieve traditional dynastic and increasingly colonialist ends.¹⁰

TROPE OF RACE AND RELIGION AND OVERDETERMINED DISCOURSES OF EMPIRE

Before examining the representation of Rodomandro as a Christian Tartar and the relationship of his embedded masque to a tradition of Jacobean “masques of blackness,” we must adjudicate the most influential critical assessments of Rodomandro to date, which deal with race and religion, respectively.¹¹ By drawing on both categories, I propose to engage the complexities of the Tartar masques in Wroth’s *Urania* without imposing historical anachronisms onto an era when English imperial aspirations did not match their achievements and when their involvement in the trans-Atlantic slave trade was not yet institutionalized.¹² As Kenneth R. Andrews in *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire, 1480–1630* underscores, “Queen Elizabeth was not an imperialist”; rather, “it was the reign of James [1603–1625] that saw the effective beginnings of the British Empire,” albeit uncertain beginnings.¹³ At the same time, we can avoid a historically deracinated reading that focuses exclusively on literary forms and thereby downplays Wroth’s engagement with the competing imperial referents of her era.¹⁴ Instead, I show how Wroth uses the resources of romance and of the masque form with which she was intimately familiar to promote a residual model of empire encompassing multiple differences under the banner of Christian universalism. Rodomandro, her representative for this model, manifests the ambivalence of the emerging racialized binary of black-versus-white as it was mapped onto the linkage of “the East” with Islam and “the West” with Christianity that characterized the early modern era.¹⁵

The second part of Wroth’s *Urania*, which she did not publish during her lifetime, features overdetermined tropes of race and religion related to the competing early modern discourses of empire that inform the romance.¹⁶ Situating English Renaissance literature within the impulse toward trans-Atlantic imperialism, Kim F. Hall in *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (1995) offered the first extended treatment of the character Rodomandro, whom she assessed in terms of a carefully historicized understanding of racialized difference.¹⁷ In the first study to focus on Wroth’s *Urania* in the context of Renaissance cosmologies, *Cherished Torment: The Emotional Geography of Lady Mary Wroth’s Urania* (2001), Shelia T. Cavanagh addressed the neglected aspect of religion for comprehending identity and empire in the period, with Rodomandro exemplifying this intersection. As noted earlier,

the second part of the *Urania* seeks to integrate Rodomandro, who is introduced as a “brave stranger” from Central Asia (*U2* 42), into the dynastic imperialist project of the romance. Most early modern European maps designated the region from which he hailed as “Tartaria,” which remained within the ambit of the Safavid Persians during Wroth’s era.¹⁸ With her natal family, the Sidneys, deeply involved in the early modern English trading companies’ inaugural voyages across “Tartaria” and into Persia, Wroth knew that Tartars were traditionally Muslim. Still, she takes pains to represent Rodomandro as a Christian who seeks to succor the imperialist forces of the West. He could be a convert from Islam, as Othello is sometimes taken to be, though Wroth provides no evidence to support this view.¹⁹ He could also be an Eastern Christian, as the Nestorians missionized the region shortly before the rise of Islam.²⁰ In any case, Wroth accentuates his Christianity throughout the romance, with no hint of its anomaly given his origins in a region known to be under Islamic rule in Wroth’s day. While Rodomandro for the most part is called the “King of Tartaria,” by the end he is also associated with the court “att Qinzai [Quinsai]” ruled by “the great Chams” (*U2* 394); yet, the title “Great Cham” (*U2* 9), from the Mongol tradition, could refer either to Rodomandro’s father or to Rodomandro himself. Undoubtedly, the uncertainties of the romance genre and the unfinished state of the manuscript contribute to this confusion of identity.²¹ Furthermore, from the medieval era through the early modern period Western Europeans conflated Mongols and Tartars.²² Together these generic imperatives and historical referents inform the ambivalent racial, ethnic, and religious designations associated with this character.

Certainly, among those characters who unsettle the “binarism of black and white” in Wroth’s *Urania*, Rodomandro is the most complex.²³ He is described from his first appearance as “black,” especially his face and his eyes, with a cascade of qualifiers attesting to his “loveliness” and “beauty” (*U1* 42).²⁴ Yet, this compliment adheres to the “black but beautiful” (“Nigra sum, sed formosa”) formula that became “a key part of the ‘typology of colonialism’” during the decades Wroth composed her prose romance.²⁵ Rodomandro endorses this formula when he proposes marriage to Pamphilia, a Greek Morean princess who becomes queen of her eponymous realm in Asia Minor. In his plea to her, he echoes Othello’s defense of his marriage to Desdemona: “Devine lady...the Tartarians are noe Orators, butt plaine blunt men. Our harts are rich in truthe and loyalltie. Prowde indeed we ar[e], but onely of Ladys favours, knowing

our sunn-burnt faces can but rarely attaine to faire ladys likings" (U2 271).²⁶ Still, Rodomandro's "hands soe white" (U2 42, 271) set him apart from the more famous "brave Moor."²⁷ As Hall clarifies, "It is conceivable that his hands function as a sign of rank, which then mitigates his race/color status," especially through the "joining of hands" in marriage. But this reading of Rodomandro through the conventions of romance does not erase his unsettling blackness; rather, it "clearly demonstrates how a social order seemingly based solely on class is profoundly—if invisibly—racialized."²⁸ I add that Rodomandro complicates these signs of race and rank by embodying the proto-orientalist opposition of East and West based on the eurocentric model that defined "the Renaissance/early modern/colonial period," with the tension between expansionist Christianity and Islam implicit in his characterization.²⁹

Analogous to the "black but beautiful" formula, Rodomandro is described as "an exquisitt man in all things and a Christian" (U2 46). This layering of race and religion further complicates his role as a familiar and even familial "other" within the imperialist narrative of the romance. Cavanagh argues that

since the *Urania* is being composed during a time of extensive exploration, Rodomandro's Tartarian origins reveal Wroth's attempt to complete an imaginative circle around the entire globe, with Tartaria serving as a route for circumnavigation....[A]s King of Tartaria, Rodomandro controls access to the pathway that could facilitate the Christian conversion of the entire world.³⁰

Benedict Robinson, in *Islam and Early Modern English Literature: The Politics of Romance from Spenser to Milton*, helps us to situate Cavanagh's claims more broadly by showing how medieval Christendom as a paradigm for cultural and political identity "had dreamed itself as a potentially world-spanning unity, a reincarnated Roman Empire." By Wroth's era, however, the model of a universal Christian empire had been superseded by the model of "'Europe' ... as a claim to difference ... that cannot be overcome."³¹ Hence, just as Wroth's sonnet sequence from the 1620s perpetuates a belated Petrarchan "counter-discourse" in the wake of her uncle Philip Sidney's four decades prior, her romance returns to the residual paradigm of Christendom layered onto a Holy Roman Empire imagined to extend into Central Asia.³² As we shall see, this layering resulted in the overdetermined representation of Rodomandro as a Christian Tartar based on the conflation of Central Asians with a range of "othered" groups in the period,

including Persians, Russians, Africans, and Native Americans. This slippage between his insider and outsider status accordingly enables, but also fissures, his negotiation of imperial desire using the masque form as he seeks to assimilate into the cosmopolitan European dynasty that depends on him to achieve its imperialist ends.

CHRISTIAN(IZED) TARTARS AND THE DREAM OF EMPIRE

To summarize thus far, by literally embodying the ambivalent signifiers for black-white, East-West, and Islam-Christianity that characterized Wroth's era, Rodomandro facilitates and unsettles the narrative movement of the romance toward a universal Christian empire secured through marital alliances and military interventions. As I have emphasized, even with his conspicuous marks of "otherness"—from his black face and eyes to his distinctly Tartar apparel—he must be incorporated into the Western imperialist dynasty at the heart of the romance. This incorporation occurs through marriage with the Greek princess Pamphilia, whose thwarted union with Amphilanthus, the king of the Romans and Holy Roman Emperor, bridges both parts of the *Urania*. More specifically, Pamphilia, who is named for her inherited kingdom on the western edge of Asia Minor, bears the epithet "easterne star" in relation to the territories of the empire connected to Amphilanthus (*U2* 117, 417).³³ The Christianized Eurasia that is the aim of the romance nevertheless hinges on succoring, and thereby incorporating, a princess whose realm lies even farther east than Pamphilia's: "the delicate, distressed princess, the rightfull Sophie of Persia" (*U2* 116). Another Eastern Christian, she is opposed to her "fierce" uncle, the "usurping Sophye of Percia" (*U2* 10, 54). With the additional titles of "Sultan," "Soldaine," "Souldan," and "Soldan," he is implicitly defined as Muslim.³⁴ The military campaigns that resolve this struggle depend on the Christian(ized) Tartarian princes, led by Rodomandro. As such, the establishment of the Eurasian empire that is the goal of the romance requires the union, not of the proximate East and West, but of the Near and Far East as represented by Pamphilia and Rodomandro. By the end of the romance, Pamphilia's union with Rodomandro enables her to claim "Asia" as "my husband's country and mine," and her brother, Rosindy, to serve as "governour of Percia" (*U2* 378, 354). Their union fulfills this dream of empire, however provisionally.³⁵

This process begins with Rodomandro's unexpected arrival at the Morean court in southern Greece, ruled by Pamphilia's father. The third-person narrator describes Rodomandro as having "so brave a

countenance and yett so sivile [civil] a demeanor as made all eyes subject to his sweetnes" (*U2* 42). This laudatory description nonetheless concludes with several unsettling qualifiers: "When as lately his very looks were dangerous, butt non need fear him, for though as valiant and stout as any, yett was hee soe discrete, soe civile, and soe curious as non[e] cowl'd (if not infinite rude) find a cause to quarrell with him" (*U2* 46). As Joan-Paul Rubiés establishes in "Late Medieval Ambassadors and the Practice of Cross-Cultural Encounters," pre-modern courts across Asia and Europe shared an understanding of "what it was to be 'civilized,'" with the Chinese representing the highest ideal for all.³⁶ Yet, from the sixteenth century onward, civility in the West was increasingly articulated through a discourse of empire that defined a "brave" as "a wild savage," projected onto the Native Americans the English sought to conquer, rather than as a "gallant soldier," which could be applied cross-culturally.³⁷ Images of Tartars similarly varied in the period, from the stereotype of "barbarous persons who display despicable habits" formulated by the thirteenth-century missionaries to the Mongol empire and republished in early modern proto-colonial collections, such as Richard Hakluyt's *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1599–1600), to the overwhelming praise of Tamburlaine as a "Tartar king."³⁸ Costume books featured the emblematic "Tatar warrior" alongside the "Persian satrap" to suggest extremes in Eastern decadence and violence, with "Tartarness" signified through "spears, swords, knives, bow, and shield."³⁹ The Tartar (more properly, Tatar) was also grouped with the Russian (or Muscovite) as straddling East and West, with representations of Tamburlaine as a Christian (or at least a Christian sympathizer) attesting to this ambivalent view.⁴⁰ In general, Tatars, traditionally pastoral nomads, are associated in European costume books with horses, sometimes through the synecdoche of a horse's tail, and tents.⁴¹ The men are depicted either with long braids, as were Native Americans, or with fur hats, as were Muscovites.

This positioning of the "Tartar" in Western imperialist discourses introduces another layer of dissonance and potential disruption into Rodomandro's debut. While he is welcomed by "[t]he King [of Morea, Pamphilia's father, who] had heard very much of this ex[c]ellent Prince" (*U2* 42), the conspicuous absence of Pamphilia and Amphilanthus, who were hunting a "cole blacke" stag with "onely one white spott on the left side in shape of an arrowe" (*U2* 43), colors this scene on several levels. "'Colors,'" Susan Frye points out in "Mary Sidney Wroth: Clothing Romance," "as an ornamented version of the

truth shades into the meaning of ‘colors’ as disguise as well as into the heraldic meaning of ‘colors’ as the flag of a particular faction.”⁴² Hall further specifies “[t]hat the stag’s white spot is in the shape of an arrow suggests a potential for alliance that a strict black/white binarism might disallow.”⁴³ This “spot” has an analogous resonance to the otherwise “black” Rodomandro’s white hands. Overall, the effect of this passage is to overlay the generic expectations of classical Greek romance, with its ambiguous color-codings of genealogical and cultural difference, with markers that increasingly will be defined through fixed categories of “race.”⁴⁴

Still, to achieve the universal Christian empire that is the aim of the romance, such tensions around religious and racialized difference must be subsumed into the union of East and West. As the romance reveals, this union can only be accomplished through the marriage of Rodomandro and Pamphilia, despite her preference for Amphilanthus. Wroth mediates between these potentially conflicting orientations by casting Rodomandro as a protagonist who composes a masque that becomes pivotal to the imperialist aims of the romance. To appreciate how Rodomandro uses the masque form to facilitate his incorporation into the imperial project of the romance, we must consider the tradition of Jacobean “masques of blackness” in which Wroth participated as a performer and which she refracted through the sonnet sequence appended to the published *Urania*. Only then can we understand how Rodomandro’s representation as black-and-white and as a Christian from traditionally Islamic regions shapes his intervention into the genre. Moreover, only then can we assess how Wroth’s inclusion of this masque informs her attempt to contain competing discourses of race, religion, and empire within the Christian hegemony she imagines in her romance.

JACOBEOAN “MASQUES OF BLACKNESS” AS (ANTI)MASTER NARRATIVE

Rodomandro’s response to the tensions that shape his characterization and propel the narrative, which requires his integration into its core through a cross-cultural and apparently interracial marriage, is “in manner of a maske” (U246). In *The Stuart Court Masque and Political Culture*, Martin Butler documents how this genre functioned as the primary vehicle for the increasingly cosmopolitan Jacobean court to mark the boundaries of “‘who’s in” and “‘who’s out.”⁴⁵ Significantly for our discussion of Rodomandro, the first masque at Hampton Court featured King James’s Scottish and English courtiers, some

with Welsh connections, as “Indian and China knights.”⁴⁶ Prominent among these courtiers was William Herbert, who would become Lord Chamberlain and the earl of Pembroke; he was also Mary Wroth’s first cousin and “first love”—and eventually father of her two “illegitimate” children.⁴⁷ As Butler explains, “Even in the absence of a text [for this performance], *The Masque of Indian and China Knights* shows how powerfully Stuart festivals could articulate the court’s collective identity, their ability to signal dependence and identification, association and belonging, and forge a unity knitted together from Whitehall’s competing interest-groups.” The cross-cultural imperatives of this inaugural Jacobean masque produced the features that would become standard for the genre, including “the entry of outsiders, their exotic and chivalric disguises, their approach, gift-giving, homage, and social dancing.”⁴⁸ All of these elements are present in Rodomandro’s masque. However, while non-Western ambassadors, such as those from Morocco and Muscovy, attended court masques throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, no record exists for non-Western performers of an equivalent rank in these productions.⁴⁹ The Tartarian king in Wroth’s romance thus goes a step further in appropriating these “strategies of exclusion and inclusion” by staging his debut performance himself.⁵⁰ Using the form and occasion of his inaugural masque in a manner similar to *The Masque of Indian and China Knights*, he effectively negotiates the fraught moment between his initial exclusion and subsequent inclusion.

Wroth herself appeared in at least one masque for the Jacobean court: *The Masque of Blackness*, performed on January 6, 1604 (Old Style; 1605, New Style), the first of a series of masques in which Queen Anna, James I’s consort, performed and arguably “authored.”⁵¹ This masque has been seen as particularly meaningful for the Jacobean’s court’s negotiation of cultural otherness, including the bold intrusion of women into court politics, and echoes of it appear in both parts of the *Urania*.⁵² Toward the end of the published first part of the romance, Wroth introduces a character whose tragic story of love and betrayal commences with similar court performances. Pamphilia’s younger brother, Philarchos, encounters this lady in a boat, with “onely a Dogge,” preparing to die through lack of food or by becoming the dog’s food (*UI* 534–5). We learn as she relates her story that she had been sentenced to a cruel death for some undisclosed crime (*UI* 540). But the first stage in this tragic plot occurs when she “saw those sports the Court affects, and are necessary follies for that place, as Masques and Dauncings, and was an Actor likewise my selfe amongst them” (*UI* 536). Just as many of Wroth’s female characters

“shadow” her betrayal by William Herbert, who abandoned her for a more lucrative match, this episode points toward her firsthand experience with the cultural and political dynamics of the court masque.⁵³

In “Pamphilia to Amphilanthus,” the sonnet sequence appended to the published romance, Wroth explores the fraught negotiation of otherness characteristic of the masque form through the poem that begins,

Like to the Indians scorched with the sunne,
The sunne which they do as theyr God adore
Soe ame I us'd by love, for ever more
I worship him, less favors have I wunne.⁵⁴

This stanza echoes the two main premises of *The Masque of Blackness*: “[t]o prove the beauty best / Which not the color but the feature / Assures unto the creature” and to show, referring to the “twelve nymphs, Negroes, and the daughters of Niger,” that “in their black the perfect'st beauty grows.”⁵⁵ As with the masque, where Queen Anna and her ladies personate a bevy of beautiful “Negroes,” Wroth retains—even as she complicates—the conventional hierarchy of white over black:

Better are they who thus to blacknes runn,
And soe can onely whitenes want deplore
Then I who pale, and white ame with griefes store,
Nor can have hope, butt to see hopes undunn.⁵⁶

Her blackness, indelible in the masque performance where the ladies painted their exposed skin instead of donning vizards, here becomes metaphorical.⁵⁷ Yet, it is whiteness, not blackness, that encodes the disease of melancholy for Wroth.⁵⁸ As in the rest of the sonnet sequence, the main paradox of the poem interiorizes an allegorized “Love” to circumvent the dangers Petrarchism posed for women as both objects and subjects of desire. The final volta runs, “Then let mee weare the marke of Cupids might,” an image that suggests an erotic and potentially racialized bruising reminiscent of Shakespeare’s Cleopatra (*Antony and Cleopatra* 1.5.27–9). The last lines similarly specify, “in hart / as they in skin of Phoebus light,” alluding to the “scorched cheeks” of the “Ethiopian daughters” of the masque, one of whom Wroth played.

While the published *Urania* concludes with an enchantment in “a round building like a Theater” (*UI* 372) and focuses on lyric poetry,

the second part of the romance shifts this balance by scattering references to courtly performances throughout the narrative. The first mention of masques in part 2, as in part 1, frames a tale of love and betrayal: in this case, in “the kingdome of Dacia, where the King gave all the Royall entertainment that might bee, ore could bee imagined: J[o]usts and all exersises of warr were there and bravly performed, att nights maskes, and dauncings, and such court sports” (*U2* 14). Here, courtly performances lead to civil war, foreshadowing the “flames” in Asia that culminate the plot strand initiated by the arrival of the Tartarian king at the Morean court (*U2* 220, 258, 378).⁵⁹ This episode, along with Wroth’s refractions of Jacobean “masques of blackness” in her sonnet sequence, sets the stage for the more ambivalent performances of difference by the black-and-white Christian Tartar king, Rodomandro.

RODOMANDRO’S MASQUE AND THE INSTABILITY OF IMPERIALIST POETICS

Framed with a reference to Amphilanthus’s jealousy upon noticing how “the Tartarians black eyes must needs incounter the true heaven of Pamphilias gray eyes and yeeld to them, as to the perfect sky, the rule of his and their thoughts” (*U2* 44), Rodomandro’s masque features twelve noblemen of his party, including himself, and twenty-four torchbearers of lesser rank. A decorously contained ferocity defines the Tartarian masquers. As for the lower-ranked torchbearers, “visards they had non[e], the most of them having faces grimm and hard enough to bee counted visards” (*U2* 46). This description praises their martial abilities, but it also evokes the negative terms applied to Tartars by Western Europeans from the medieval era through the early modern period, such as “inhumane,” “deformed,” “uncivil or savage.”⁶⁰ Unlike the lower-ranked torchbearers, the more aristocratic “maskers had a pretty kinde of visards or slight coverings of their faces” and “their apparell [was] after the Tartarian fashion.” This ethnic—and potentially racial and religious—difference is signified through “spurs of pure golde, butt nott soe long as their torchbearers were, butt convenient to daunce with and nott to be offensive to the ladys when they would honor them with dancing with them” (*U2* 46). These Tartarian noblemen display their “otherness” using the stereotype of the fierce steppe warrior of the costume books and maps that circulated in early modern Europe; yet, they modify their attire for a Western court that included women as pivotal members of the audience as well as potential authors and performers. Their spurs,

as Wroth stresses, do not interfere with their courtship of the noble European women.

This accommodation contrasts with the episode where the usurping Sophy of Persia, “in demanding such a princess [in this case, Pamphilia] for wife by way of threatening and force,” violently breaches the etiquette of Western courts (*U2* 108). The romance also shows a Western prince—Licandro, “Prince of Athens and Son of the Duke of Athens”⁶¹—in an Eastern court breaching its etiquette when he kisses the hand of the king of Tartaria’s sister, “but so fervently as if his lips would have dwelt there” (*U2* 77). This princess, “never used to such moist salutes, took her hand away, somewhat more near snatching than courteous taking it, and with a frown, able (from such heavenlike beauty) to kill than please, turned away, which made a bashful blush rise in the prince” (*U2* 78). Unlike the Sophy of Persia and the Athenian prince, the Tartar king and his men effectively adapt the privileged form for negotiating gender mores in a strange court: in this case, the masque. They are therefore able to avail themselves of the cross-cultural alliances necessary to fulfill the imperialist aims of the romance.

The “Jacobean fascination with difference,” which links *The Masque of Blackness* with Wroth’s *Urania*, is interrogated in the first part of the romance when the title character’s maidservant thinks she “sees her beloved, Allimarlus, embracing a black woman,” whom Kim Hall identifies as “the first dark other in the text.”⁶² Hall continues: “Allimarlus’s embrace of the black woman represents female fears of the foreign difference that heroes—and travelers—encounter on these romantic adventures,” with this episode “foreground[ing] a gendered difference key to romance: men desire conquest whereas women desire men.”⁶³ Rodomandro’s masque complicates this interrogation, however, by enacting a “reverse ethnography” that renders the Western women as exotics.⁶⁴ It does so by closely following the main premises of *The Masque of Blackness* explicated earlier, with the first speech from Cupid rebuking the Tartarian noblemen for “rambl[ing] abroad” in search of “vanities and change of featur[s]” (*U2* 46). This allegorical figure demands: “May not the beauties of Tartaria for ever hate mee, revile my government, scorne my power, to see their deeres thus stray from them to gaze on other faces? May nott your own Ladys curse me to my face that I was missing to stay your Journeys?” (*U2* 46). Cupid ultimately condemns the Tartarian men, in the name of “the beauties of Tartaria,” as “straglers” and “run-aways” (*U2* 46–7). The cosmopolitan European women of the Greek Morean court are now the suspect “others.”

Yet, this reversal is quickly and violently overthrown by the allegorical figure of Honor, who orders Cupid to “first beeginn your supplications heere to thes all Judging eyes, thes Ladys of blessedness and truest honor,” meaning those of the Morean court (*U2* 47).⁶⁵ In keeping with their eventual role as defenders of Western interests against the usurping Sophy of Persia, the Tartarians’ honor here is the traditionally masculine one of military valor and courage. The ladies’ honor, informed by the betrayals in the two previous episodes featuring masques, corresponds to their putative “blessedness” (*U1* 538). In a resonant parallel, the misogynistic Iago insinuates that Desdemona is unchaste using the racially loaded logic, “If she had been blessed, she would never have loved the Moor.”⁶⁶ This questioning of women’s honor harkens back to a pivotal incident that occurred between the first appearance of Rodomandro at the Morean court and the staging of his masque. In this episode, Amphilanthus’s jealousy upon Rodomandro’s arrival propels him to marry Pamphilia through “a simple, oral pronouncement rather than a formal ceremony” (i.e., *per verba de praesenti*), which he later breaches by officially marrying another woman.⁶⁷ With elaborate euphemisms about their “happiness” (*U2* 45), the romance fails to resolve whether Pamphilia and Amphilanthus consummated their union, which parallels the similar ambiguity in *Othello*.⁶⁸ Even though their sexual intercourse would have been licit in this context, women in such situations became vulnerable to men denying that the private marriage ceremony ever took place, as Wroth knew firsthand.⁶⁹ Moreover, as highlighted in the previous episodes featuring masques, even when an intimate liaison has not been consummated, the consequences for the female partner if the facts were deemed otherwise could be deadly. The Tartarian king, who will eventually marry Pamphilia and certainly consummates their public marriage, as the birth of their son proves, shows immense tact in concealing what he likely knows.⁷⁰

Highlighting how well Rodomandro negotiated his status as insider-outsider by adapting the masque form, the third-person narrator concludes this account by praising the Tartar king’s fulfillment of the cosmopolitan European court’s desires, which extend to the dream of empire. The “brave Tartarian, whos witt and pleasant feator did give much pleasure and admiration to the beeholders” earned everyone’s applause, “especially [from] the excellent Lady,” Pamphilia (*U2* 49). Echoing *The Masque of Blackness*’s central premise that “not the color but the feature” determines perfect beauty, “feator” in this passage could be glossed as “feature” to follow the description of Rodomandro: “for though black, yett hee had the true perfection of

loveliness, and in lovelines the purest beauty. For what is fairnes with out feature, even as a picture is with out the life peece itt self?" (U2 42). However, "feator" may have a more specific meaning relevant to Rodomandro's masque, resonating with the adjective "featous": "Of persons and their limbs: Well-formed, well-proportioned, handsome"; "Of things: Skilfully or artistically fashioned; hence, in wider sense, elegant, handsome, becoming. Often of dress" (*OED*). Following the generic expectations for Jacobean masques, this performance of inclusion within the imperialist dynasty at the heart of the romance concludes when, pulling off "their visards" after the final song and with the king of Morea's permission, the Tartarians "tooke the ladys forthe to dance" (U2 49). As was customary, the dance was followed by "an infinite rich banquet prepared purposely for Rodomandro and his companion maskers, who were all princes in his countrey butt his subjects" (U2 49). Henceforth, the Tartarian king is no longer a "stranger," but a provisional insider who facilitates the universal Christian empire the romance advances as an imaginary resolution to the reality of Ottoman expansionism.⁷¹

Wroth, by negotiating discourses of race, religion, and empire through the cross-cultural coupling of Pamphilia and Rodomandro, earned little applause. The published first part of the *Urania* was subject to the ire of prominent Jacobean courtiers for its exposure of violent patriarchal practices.⁷² The second part of the romance, a manuscript Wroth probably broke off in the early 1630s, arguably shifts to a more cautious embrace of monarchial absolutism, Christian triumphalism, and traditional marriage as a result. But it continues her exploration of imperialist themes, layering the anachronistic dream of a universal Christian empire with the increasingly exclusive conceptualization of race that would dominate subsequent English involvement with the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the colonies it supported. Rodomandro, as a "brave stranger" (U2 42), remains crucial to the union of East and West advanced by the residual model of dynastic empire at the center of the romance, even as his status as an exceptional, yet racially (and perhaps even religiously) marked "other" destabilizes this imperialist imaginary. As a Tartar, he is conflated explicitly with signifiers of blackness associated with marginalized Africans in the romance and implicitly with the "wild savage" or Native American whom the English confused with Tartars from the beginning of their ventures in the sixteenth century.⁷³ This conflation, during an era when the English were acutely conscious of their status as "sluggish" imperialists, nonetheless enables the possibility that Wroth pursues of marrying the "Tartarian king" to the "never-

enough-admired Pamphilia” as a means to unite East and West under a Christian imperial banner (*U2* 417).⁷⁴ Rodomandro’s disappearance from the romance once this goal is achieved, only to haunt its margins posthumously (*U2* 406–7), suggests that this possibility no longer holds in the era of Ottoman advances into Europe and English advances across the Atlantic.

NOTES

1. Josephine A. Roberts initiated this line of investigation in her Critical Introduction to Mary Wroth, *The First Part of the Countess of Montgomery’s Urania*, ed. Roberts (Binghamton, New York: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1995). Wroth published this romance, the first of its kind by an Englishwoman, in 1621. For the manuscript continuation, see Mary Wroth, *The Second Part of the Countess of Montgomery’s Urania*, ed. Josephine A. Roberts, completed by Suzanne Gossett and Janel Mueller (Tempe, Arizona: Renaissance English Text Society, 1999). Extended analyses of themes related to empire in this second part, which introduces Tartar and Persian characters, include Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economics of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1995), 187–210; Shelia T. Cavanagh, *Cherished Torment: The Emotional Geography of Lady Mary Wroth’s Urania* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2001), 19–52; Bernadette Andrea, *Women and Islam in Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 30–52; and Victor Skretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance: Philhellene Protestantism, Renaissance Translation, and English Literary Politics* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 271–335.
2. On “universal Christian empire,” see John M. Headley, “The Habsburg World Empire and the Revival of Ghibellinism,” in *Theories of Empire, 1450–1800*, ed. David Armitage (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 50. Armitage, in his Introduction to *Theories of Empire*, xv–xxxiii, puts this imperial discourse, which Headley analyzes in terms of the Spanish king and Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (1550–8), in a broader temporal and geographic frame. Frances A. Yates, “The Tudor Imperial Reform,” in *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), 29–121, relates it to English aspirations. Skretkowicz cites Yates at the beginning of his chapter on “Mary Sidney Wroth’s *Urania*” in *European Erotic Romance*, 271–2. However, his reading of the romance as an “allegorised political fantasy [that] conjures up a vision of a Protestant Europe coming piecemeal, over three generations, under the control of the Sidney-Herbert families” is overly literalist (273).

3. I fully understand that “Native American” is an anachronistic term; I use it in this essay to signal the various early modern terms for the indigenous people of this continent. I similarly use the term “African” to denote the various ethnic groups the English encountered on that continent.
4. For the Sidney connections to the inaugural English ventures through Central Asia as far as Persia, see Bernadette Andrea, “Persia, Tartaria, and Pamphilia: Ideas of Asia in Mary Wroth’s *The Countess of Montgomery’s Urania*, Part II,” in *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*, eds. Debra Johanyak and Walter S. H. Lim (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 32. See also Margaret P. Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), 211–12, 269.
5. Sujata Iyengar, *Shades of Difference: Mythologies of Skin Color in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 20. Iyengar discusses Heliodorus’s *Aithiopia* or *Ethiopian Story* (230–75 CE), which was hugely influential in the Renaissance. For more, see Skretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance*, 111–65, and Elizabeth Bearden’s forthcoming study, *Emblematics of the Self: Ekphrasis and Identity in Renaissance Imitations of Ancient Greek Romance* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011).
6. Wroth, *The Second Part of the . . . Urania*, 42, 9. Henceforth cited parenthetically as U2. On “strategies of exclusion and inclusion” in the Jacobean masque, see Martin Butler, *The Stuart Court Masque and Political Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 114.
7. On Amphilanthus, who shadows Mary Wroth’s first cousin and “first love,” William Herbert, see Roberts, Critical Introduction to *The First Part of the . . . Urania*, lxxvi–lxxxix. For more, see Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth*, 251–3.
8. Robert J. C. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995), xii.
9. Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 8.
10. For the models of empire operative in this period, see Nicholas Canny, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. 1, *The Origins of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
11. On the inextricability of race and religion in English discourses of the period, see Margaret W. Ferguson, *Dido’s Daughters: Literacy, Gender, and Empire in Early Modern England and France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 316–29.
12. As Gustav Ungerer documents in *The Mediterranean Apprenticeship of British Slavery* (Madrid: Editorial Verbum, 2008), English involvement in the trans-Atlantic trade began far earlier than scholars sometimes maintain. He discusses English slave traders such as William

- de la Founte from the late fifteenth century, Thomas Malliard and Nicolas Arnold from the beginning of the sixteenth century, and Robert Thorne in the 1530s.
13. Kenneth R. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire, 1480–1630* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 11, 13. For related views, see Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 10, and Daniel Goffman, *Britons in the Ottoman Empire, 1642–1660* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 4.
 14. In their Introduction to *Race in Early Modern England: A Documentary Companion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), Ania Loomba and Jonathan Burton express similar concerns about “[t]he recent critical tendency to claim that racism could not be said to exist in the early modern period because various non-Europeans were also praised and admired at that time,” a view they call “reductive and unhelpful in tracing the histories of race” (7).
 15. C. W. Connell, “Western Views of the Tartars, 1240–1340” (PhD dissertation, Rutgers University, 1969), 24–8, discusses the shifting designations of “East” and “West” from the medieval through the early modern period, which corresponds to the shift from a Jerusalem-centered worldview to a eurocentric one. I use the term “the West” with his qualifications in mind. See also C. W. Connell, “Western Views of the Origin of the ‘Tartars’: An Example of the Influence of Myth in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 3.1 (1973): 115–37.
 16. As I note in *Women and Islam*, the “mass conversion to Christianity [in the Throne of Love episode on the island of Cyprus] remains an anomaly in the resolutely classical first part of *Urania*” (46). However, the second part of the *Urania* “shifts towards an openly imperialist ideology of proselytizing Christianity, which the published *Urania* more ambivalently puts under erasure” (39). I note in “Persia, Tartaria, and Pamphilia” that Christianity in Wroth’s romance is represented as “primarily in service of political expansionism and not presented as a spiritual practice or doctrine” (23), an argument also made by Shelia T. Cavanagh, “‘She Is but Enchanted’: Christianity and the Occult in Lady Mary Wroth’s *Urania*,” in *Things of the Spirit: Women Writers Constructing Spirituality*, ed. Kristina K. Groover (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 69–89. This reading of Christianity in the romance runs counter to Skretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance*, which places the *Urania* within a tradition, epitomized by her uncle Sir Philip Sidney, of “European philhellene Protestant political theory” (5, *passim*).
 17. For a study that extends Hall’s focus on “a semiotics of race in early modern English culture generally” (*Things of Darkness* 10),

- see Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker, eds. *Women, "Race," and Writing in the Early Modern Period* (London: Routledge, 1994). For a more recent assessment, see Loomba and Burton, eds., *Race in Early Modern England*. These important studies on "race" in early modern England bookend an immense amount of work in this field; Loomba and Burton list representative examples in their endnotes to their Introduction (28–36).
18. For early modern maps representing Central Asia as Tartaria, see Elio Christoph Brancaforte, *Visions of Persia: Mapping the Travels of Adam Olearius* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003), 164–5. On the maps Wroth likely consulted, including Mercator's and Ortelius's, see Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth*, 244. Roberts, Critical Introduction to *The First Part of the . . . Urania*, links Rodomandro to "the Saracen Rodomonte" from Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (xxvii). The complete version of this influential romance was published in Italian in 1532 and translated into English by John Harington in 1591.
 19. Melissa E. Sanchez, "The Politics of Masochism in Mary Wroth's *Urania*," *ELH* 74 (2007): 449–78, incorrectly refers to Rodomandro as a "lapsed pagan" (468).
 20. For the past and present history of the Nestorians, see William Dalrymple, *From the Holy Mountain: A Journey Among the Christians of the Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt, 1997), 66, 136, 139–42.
 21. For a recent confirmation of this view, see Skretkowicz, "The Great Cham and His Dynasty," in *European Erotic Romance*, 300–2.
 22. As Richard W. Cogley points out in "'The Most Vile and Barbarous Nation of All the World': Giles Fletcher the Elder's *The Tartars Or, Ten Tribes* (ca. 1610)," *Renaissance Quarterly* 58 (2005), "Fletcher and many others in Tudor-Stuart England (1485–1714) viewed the Mongols, the Turks, the Tatars, and the Timurids simply as Tartars" (783). Specifically, "the English word Tartar is a corruption of Tatar, an Arabic and Persian designation for a people who lived to the southeast of modern Mongolia until being eradicated by Chinggis or Genghis Khan (d. 1227) around the turn of the thirteenth century" (796). For the false etymology linking "Tartar" to "Tartarus," or the classical hell, see Cogley 798–9. On the positive view of Tartars in the era, see Andrea, "Persia, Tartaria, and Pamphilia," 29–36.
 23. Hall, *Things of Darkness*, discusses the episode in part 1 of the *Urania* where Allimarlus, page to the king of Romania, embraces a black woman (188–9), and the episode in part 2 where the character Follietto bemoans his "'tanned, scorched face'" (208). Like Rodomandro, he is described as "a Very hansom black man, well-shaped for strength, well-featurd of face, butt ill-complexioned; yett

- had hee exceeding white hands, and they showed a hope his skinn was answerable" (*U2* 61).
24. Skretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance*, incorrectly claims that Rodomandro has a "pale complexion" like his half-Persian, half-Tartar sister (308).
 25. Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 108.
 26. *Othello*, 1.3.81, from *The Norton Shakespeare: Based on the Oxford Edition*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt et al. (New York: Norton, 1997). All references to Shakespeare are from this edition. Wroth likely saw this play during the 1604/5 season (Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth*, 123).
 27. *Othello*, 1.3.290.
 28. Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 210, who cites *Othello*, 3.4.46–7.
 29. On "proto-orientalism," see Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576–1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 17. For "the Renaissance/early modern/colonial period," see Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization*, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), viii. Mignolo marks this moment as occurring "when Europe moves from a peripheral situation in relation to Islam to a central position in relation to the constitution of the Spanish Empire, the expulsion of the Moors, and the success of trans-Atlantic expansion" from the end of the fifteenth century (xi).
 30. Cavanagh, *Cherished Torment*, 41. While Cavanagh's study is praise-worthy as "the first comprehensive study of Lady Mary Wroth's *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania* from the perspective of a gendered intellectual history of the Renaissance," as I stress in *Sixteenth Century Journal* 34.1 (2003): 212–3, I take issue with her assumption that Tartars (Tatars) are always represented negatively in the period, on which see Andrea, "Persia, Tartaria, and Pamphilia," 24–5, 29–30. On Tatars in Elizabethan England and their connections to the Sidney family, see Bernadette Andrea, "The Tartar Girl, The Persian Princess, and Early Modern English Women's Authorship from Elizabeth I to Mary Wroth," in *Women Writing Back/Writing Women Back: Transnational Perspectives from the Late Middle Ages to the Dawn of the Modern Era*, eds. Anke Gilleir, Alicia C. Montoya, and Suzan van Dijk (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 257–81, and Bernadette Andrea, "Elizabeth I and Persian Exchanges," in *The Foreign Relations of Elizabeth I*, ed. Charles Beem (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 169–99.
 31. Benedict S. Robinson, *Islam and Early Modern English Literature: The Politics of Romance from Spenser to Milton* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 14.

32. Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth*, remarks that Wroth “wrote sonnets in an old-fashioned mode” (xiii; see also 181–2). For more on Wroth’s belated Petrarchism, see Heather Dubrow, *Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchism and Its Counterdiscourses* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1995), 134–61.
33. Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth*, observes: “In addition to their more global designations, this may reflect [William Herbert, third earl of] Pembroke’s home in Wiltshire to the west of London and the court, and [Mary] Wroth’s home in Essex to the east” (244). Pamphilia is associated with Wroth; Amphilanthus with William Herbert. For more on this relationship, see note above 7.
34. See the “Index of Characters in Part Two,” in Wroth, *The Second Part of the . . . Urania*, 568.
35. On this provisionality, see Cavanagh, *Cherished Torment*, 30.
36. Joan-Paul Rubiés, “Late Medieval Ambassadors and the Practice of Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1250–1450,” in *The ‘Book’ of Travels: Genre, Ethnology, and Pilgrimage, 1250–1700*, ed. Palmira Brummett (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 40.
37. *Oxford English Dictionary* [OED], 2nd ed. (1989), s.v. “brave” (n.).
38. Cavanagh, *Cherished Torment*, 39; Andrea, “Persia, Tartaria, and Pamphilia,” 30–4.
39. Brancaforte, *Visions of Persia*, 53.
40. *Ibid.*, 54; Andrea, “Persia, Tartaria, and Pamphilia,” 34–6. For the identification of Muscovy with the East in the period, see John Michael Archer *Old Worlds: Egypt, Southwest Asia, India, and Russia in Early Modern English Writing* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 101–38.
41. Brancaforte, *Visions of Persia*, 167.
42. Susan Frye, “Mary Sidney Wroth: Clothing Romance,” in *Pens and Needles: Women’s Textualities in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 206.
43. Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 208.
44. Hendricks and Parker, Introduction to *Women, “Race,” and Writing*, 1–2.
45. Butler, *Stuart Court Masque and Political Culture*, 36.
46. *Ibid.*, 63. See also Linda McJannet, “Pirates, Merchants, and Kings: Oriental Motifs in English Court and Civic Entertainments, 1510–1659,” in *The Mysterious and the Foreign in Early Modern England*, eds. Helen Ostovich, Mary V. Silcox, and Graham Roebuck (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 249–65.
47. On Pembroke’s role in the masque, see Butler, *Stuart Court Masque*, 63–4.
48. *Ibid.*, 66–7.
49. On the presence of the Moroccan and Russian ambassadors at the masques, see Butler, *Stuart Court Masque*, 50, 53, 55. Hannay, *Mary*

- Sidney, Lady Wroth*, indicates that Wroth may have seen both ambassadors at court entertainments (77); she may also have encountered Pocahontas at a masque performance (177–8). For the participation of low-status non-Westerners in court entertainments in sixteenth-century Scottish entertainments, including those involving King James and his queen, see Bernadette Andrea, “Black Skin, The Queen’s Masques: Africanist Ambivalence and Feminine Author(ity) in the Masques of *Blackness* and *Beauty*,” *English Literary Renaissance* 29 (1999): 246–81. For “An English Masque at Constantinople” in the 1650s, see Barbara Ravelhoffer, *The Early Stuart Masque: Dance, Costume, and Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 230–61.
50. As a point of comparison, King James did not dance in his court entertainments, unlike Henry VIII in the English court and James IV in the Scottish court (Butler, *Stuart Court Masque*, 114).
 51. Andrea, “Black Skin, The Queen’s Masques,” 249–55.
 52. *The Masque of Blackness*, in *Renaissance Drama: An Anthology of Plays and Entertainments*, ed. Arthur F. Kinney (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 357–67. Kinney lists the masque under Ben Jonson’s *imprimatur*; I refrain from assigning Jonson proprietary authorship over the masque, on which see “Black Skin, The Queen’s Masques.” Hence, I will refer to the masque by its title only.
 53. On this “shadowing,” see Roberts, Critical Introduction to *The First Part of the . . . Urania*, lxxi.
 54. Mary Wroth, *The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), ed. Josephine A. Roberts, 99, lines 1–4. Roberts retains the original spelling, but adjusts capitalization. In the 1621 printed edition of “Pamphilia to Amphilanthus,” the word “Love” is capitalized. For the relationship of the sonnet sequence and the masque form, see Anita M. Hagerman, “‘But Wroth pretends’: Discovering Jonsonian Masque in Lady Mary Wroth’s *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*,” *Early Modern Literary Studies* 6.3 (2001): 4.1–17. For the view that “Wroth’s crown of sonnets contained within *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* is a masque rather than part of a traditional sonnet sequence,” see Susan Lauffer O’Hara, “Sonnets as Theater: The Performance of Ideal Love and the Negation of Marriage in Mary Wroth’s Masque,” *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 29.1 (2003): 59. Skretkowicz remarks in *European Erotic Romance* that “Mary Sidney Wroth reshapes Plutarch, Longus, Achilles Tatius, Heliodorus, *Amadis de Gaule*, Sidney, Shakespeare and Jonson into a new kind of European erotic romance, a sophistic prose masque” (334).
 55. *Masque of Blackness*, 363, lines 116–18; 362, lines 61–3; 363, line 150.
 56. Wroth, *Poems*, 99, lines 1–4.
 57. On the innovation of using paint for blackening the face and hands, see Andrea, “Black Skin, The Queen’s Masques,” 255–67.

58. Wroth, *Poems*, 99, lines 5–8.
59. For the significance of “Asia in Flames,” see Cavanagh, *Cherished Torment*, 113–23.
60. *Ibid.*, 39.
61. See the “Index of Characters in Part Two,” in Wroth, *The Second Part of the... Urania*, 563.
62. Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 187–8.
63. *Ibid.*, 189.
64. On “reverse ethnography,” see Ros Ballaster, *Fables of the East: Selected Tales, 1662–1785* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 260.
65. Skretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance*, notes that “Cupid’s submission to Honor” in Rodomandro’s masque is delivered through “a poem echoing Angel Day’s pastoral” (312).
66. *Othello*, 2.1.244.
67. See Josephine A. Roberts, “‘The Knott Never to Bee Untied’: The Controversy Regarding Marriage in Mary Wroth’s *Urania*,” in *Reading Mary Wroth: Representing Alternatives in Early Modern England*, eds. Naomi J. Miller and Gary Waller (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 115.
68. For the debate about whether Othello and Desdemona consummated their marriage, see Michael Neill, “Unproper Beds: Race, Adultery, and the Hideous in *Othello*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 40 (1989): 396n37.
69. Roberts, Critical Introduction to *The First Part of the... Urania*, lxxiii.
70. Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth*, considers the possibility that Wroth was not a virgin upon her marriage to Robert Wroth due to a prior “*de praesenti* wedding pact” with William Herbert (107–8). Robert was not as understanding as Rodomandro.
71. In her otherwise brilliant chapter “An English Masque at Constantinople” in *The Early Stuart Masque*, Ravelhoffer erroneously claims that “[i]n the mid-seventeenth century, the Ottoman Empire represented a weakened but still formidable military and substantial economic power” (231). Caroline Finkel counters this widespread fallacy in “‘The Treacherous Cleverness of Hindsight’: Myths of Ottoman Decay,” in *Re-Orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East*, ed. Gerald MacLean (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 148–75.
72. Roberts, in her Introduction to *The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth* 31–6, details the backlash with which Wroth’s published *Urania*, with its critique of Jacobean patriarchal mores, was greeted. See also Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth*, 234–42.
73. Andrea, “Persia, Tartaria, and Pamphilia,” 37–9.

74. On the English as “sluggish” imperialists, see Richard Hakluyt, “The Epistle Dedicatorie” (“To the right worshipfull and most vertuous Gentleman master Phillip Sydney Esquire”), in *Divers voyages touching the discoverie of America, and the Ilands adiacent vnto the same, made first of all by our Englishmen, and afterward by the Frenchmen and Britons* (London: 1582), sig. *2.

CHAPTER 5



MARIAM KHAN AND THE LEGACY OF MUGHAL WOMEN IN EARLY MODERN LITERATURE OF INDIA

Bindu Malieckal

MEETING MUGHAL WOMEN

In John Dryden's play, *Amboyna, or the Cruelties of the Dutch to the English Merchants* (1673), the Indonesian princess Ysabinda is an almost unidentifiable re-creation of a historical figure named Mariam Khan, wife of the English trader Gabriel Towerson.¹ *Amboyna* is based on the 1623 torture and murder of Towerson by the Dutch and is therefore invested in an accurate if martyred depiction of Towerson, whose name remains "Gabriel Towerson" in the play. Towerson's real wife, Mariam Khan, is not transferred similarly but "recast" as Ysabinda and married to the Towerson of Dryden's text. As contemporary criticism points out, Mariam Khan virtually disappears in the transformation to Ysabinda, and at first glance, the departure appears inconsequential since there is limited information about her.² Mariam Khan (dates unknown) was a resident of the Mughal Empire in northern India (1526–1858) and the daughter of Mubarak Khan, an influential merchant in the courts of the Mughal emperors Akbar (r. 1556–1605) and Jahangir (r. 1605–27). While Mughal emperors were Muslims, their subjects and associates were of different nationalities and religions, from Persians and Turks to Hindus and Portuguese Catholics. Mubarak Khan and Mariam Khan were Armenian Christians, of

which there were large communities throughout early modern India.³ After the death of her father, Mariam's relatives appropriated her inheritance, and in 1612, Jahangir arranged Mariam's marriage to East India Company operative William Hawkins (1565?–1613). Mariam accompanied Hawkins on his return journey to England, but upon Hawkins's death and burial en route, she married another Englishman, Gabriel Towerson (1576–1623), who had joined the fleet at Sumatra. After two years' residence in London, the couple returned to India in 1617. Towerson abandoned Mariam, returned to England in 1619, and then resettled in Amboyna. Mariam made futile appeals to the East India Company for maintenance. The company directed Towerson to address his wife's complaints, but Towerson did not respond. When Towerson was killed, the East India Company bypassed Mariam and awarded Towerson's assets to his brother. There is no record of Mariam Khan's final fate.⁴

As the wife of two of the earliest Englishmen in the Mughal Empire and possibly the first Indian woman to officially immigrate to England, Mariam Khan's history is not secondary to her husbands' exploits. Mariam Khan represents the early modern West's view of Mughal India's outstanding wealth, tolerant religious identity, charitable emperors, and impartial gender policies. Regarding the last, Mariam Khan's and other Mughal women's legacies in early modern literature *of* India, whether English, European, or Indian narratives, depict them as intelligent, independent, loyal, and political. The shared characteristics of Mariam Khan and her Mughal "sisters"—Mariam Makani, Mariam uz-Zamani, and Gulbandan Begam (Akbar's mother, chief consort, and aunt, respectively) and Noor Jahan (Jahangir's twentieth wife and formidable coruler)—include being major players in politics, trade, and domestic matters. These roles inspired their textual portrayals, both complimentary and critical. Examining European, particularly English, responses to India in terms of women contributes to published discourses on early modern Anglo-Indian relations, discourses that include some study of India's women but more often provide the necessary references to colonial frames.⁵ My review of women in Mughal autobiographies and biographies also complements existing analyses of women and empire.⁶ Sharing common beliefs but practicing contrasting cultures, Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal women testify to the diversity and distinctiveness of the early modern period's "Islamic worlds" and, in the case of Mariam Khan, offer a complex legacy of representation through accounts of their journeys to the emerging empire of England and/or within English texts.

MARRYING MUGHAL WOMEN

William Hawkins's "Relations of the Occurrents which happened in the time of his residence in India, in the Country of the Great Mogoll" (1608–13) is the first English work that mentions Mariam Khan, and from it we learn of her parentage and marriage.⁷ Hawkins was a member of the Levant Company before setting out for India. He spoke to Jahangir in Turkish, a language Jahangir knew on account of his great-grandfather, Babur (r. 1526–30); the latter, who was of Turkic and Mongol ancestry, was founder of the Mughal Empire, although at the time of Jahangir and beginning with the reign of Humayun (r. 1530–40, 1555–56) Persian was the language of the Mughal court.⁸ Hawkins arrived in Mughal India in 1609, selected by his East India Company colleagues to present James I's letters to Jahangir and to seek permission to establish an English trading post in Surat.⁹ The mission was a success, even though Hawkins left India before the inauguration of the trading posts. In 1613, Jahangir allowed factories to be built in Surat, Ahmadabad, and Cambay, prompting James I to dispatch Thomas Roe to India to be England's first official envoy from 1615 to 1618.¹⁰ The general contours of Hawkins's narrative match similar accounts by other Englishmen in Mughal India and combine elements of the autobiography, commercial inventory, traveler's tale, and geographical survey, spanning emotions from admiration and confidence to disdain and confusion.¹¹ Hawkins, however, also mentions his marriage and relationship with Mariam Khan, allowing for the examination of Mughal women's stories in the context of foreign interaction with India.

In general, the English were well received by the Mughals, despite conflict with Portuguese competitors and the fickleness of the emperors.¹² One of Hawkins's predecessors, Ralph Fitch, a self-described "marchant," visited Akbar's court in 1584; he notes that his associate, a jeweler named William Leeds, remained in the city of Fatehpur Sikhri when Fitch left for Bengal.¹³ Leeds's decision was compensated by Akbar, "who did entertaine him very well, and gave him an house, and five slaves, an horse, and every day sixe S. S. [shillings] in money." John Mildenhall, in 1603, also had an audience with Akbar, but his requests for trade (requests that appear not to have been sanctioned by the East India Company) faced lengthy delays when Portuguese Jesuits advised the emperor to avoid business with the English—so Mildenhall claims. Nonetheless, Akbar fancied Mildenhall, giving the impatient Englishman "garments . . . of the Christian fashion very rich and good, and willed me not to be sad, because every thing that

I would have should be accomplished to mine owne content.”¹⁴ In his *A True and Almost Incredible Report of an Englishman* (1612), Robert Coverte elaborates upon the favors bestowed on the English by Jahangir. Coverte arrived in Agra in 1609, at which time Hawkins was already ensconced at court. Coverte testifies to Hawkins’s helpfulness: “Captain Hawkins came to us, and brought us before the king, as is the custome and manner of the Countrey.”¹⁵ Similarly, William Finch, who accompanied Hawkins to India in 1608 and by Hawkins’s instructions remained in Surat until summoned to Agra, writes that when he finally reached Agra in April 1610, Hawkins introduced him to Jahangir: “Captaine [i.e., Hawkins] carried me before the King.”¹⁶ Coverte comments on Jahangir’s immense wealth—“The Mogoll is also verie bountifull”—and notes that Jahangir gives gifts of far greater value than what he receives.¹⁷ Coverte pleased Jahangir with the present of a ruby-encrusted gold whistle and a “picture of Saint John’s head cut in Amber and Gold,” but he does not list what Jahangir presented in return. During the course of his stay in Agra, Coverte acquired a measure of good will with Jahangir, so when he and his companions “Joseph Salebancke” and “John Frenchan” asked for leave to return to England, Jahangir offered posts in the army and “maintenance,” which the Englishmen declined, saying that they needed to reunite with their families. Jahangir accepted their refusal and magnanimously proffered “his Passe, under his hand and great Seale” so that the men might travel safely through the empire.¹⁸

Hawkins made a similarly good impression on his Mughal host. As he explains to his superiors at the East India Company, “Now your Worships shall understand, that I being now in the highest of my favours, the Jesuites and Portugals slept not, but by all means sought my overthrow: and to say the truth, the principall Mahumetans neere the King, envyed much that a Christian should bee so nigh unto him.”¹⁹ Just as Akbar honored Mariam Khan’s father, Jahangir bestowed Hawkins with the nobleman’s title of “Khan.” Hawkins writes, “Chan, that is to say, English Lord, but in Persia, it is the title for a Duke.” Hawkins also accepts the position of Jahangir’s “courtier.”²⁰ Coverte confirms Hawkins’s elevation and its benefit to England: “Captaine Hawkins, whom wee left therein great credit with the king, being allowed one hundreth Ruckees a day which is ten pound sterling, and is intituled by the name of a Can, which is a knight, and keepeth company with the greatest Noble men belonging to the king: and hee seemeth very willing to doe his Country good.”²¹ According to Finch, Hawkins was held in such high esteem that he was given a prominent place at a parade, consisting of sixty of

Agra's Christian citizenry, who led the way to a church where three Mughal princes were converted: "Captaine Hawkins being in the head of them, with St. Georges colours carried before him, to the honour of the English nation, letting them flie in court before Sha Selim [Jahangir] himselfe."²² The image of Hawkins as England's standard-bearer illustrates the degree to which the English had gained a foothold in the Mughal Empire and in the heart of the emperor.

Thus, after Hawkins had resided in Agra for approximately four years, Jahangir suggests that Hawkins should marry and make India his permanent home: "The King was very earnest with me to take a white Mayden out of his Palace, who would give her all things necessary with slaves, and he would promise mee shee should turne Christian: and by this meanes my meates and drinckes should be looked unto by them, and I should live without feare."²³ Hawkins relates that Akbar had been the patron of his proposed bride's father:

In regard she was a Moore, I refused, but if so bee there could bee a Christian found, I would accept it: At which my speech, I little thought a Christians Daughter could bee found. So the King called to memorie one Mubarique Sha his Daughter, who was a Christian Armenian, and of the Race of the most ancient Christians, who was a Captaine, and in great favour with Ekber Padasha, this Kings Father. This Captaine died suddenly, and without will, worth a Masse of Money, and all robbed by his Brothers and Kindred, and Debts that cannot be recovered: Leaving the Child but only a few Jewels.²⁴

At first, Jahangir did not have Mariam Khan in mind for Hawkins but rather one of the Muslim women of his *haram* [harem], the preferred term of Mughal chronicles, beginning in Akbar's time, to describe women's quarters.²⁵ Mariam Khan is considered after Hawkins objects to a Muslim fiancée. For Jahangir, faith is fluid and transferable, whereas for Hawkins, it is entrenched and immovable, but both men believe that wives must match their husbands in religious identity. This passage suggests that a potential wife's personality is secondary to the establishment of her beliefs. As we will see, such prioritizing of religion can be seen as a kind of commercialization of women and, interestingly, did not apply to Jahangir's wives and relatives. This commercialization is reflected in Mariam Khan's eventual disappearance from Hawkins's narrative. After noting that he and Mariam boarded a ship heading to England, Hawkins no longer mentions Mariam and focuses on ensuring that his Indian commodities reach home undamaged. Hawkins's preoccupation with his goods in the latter part of the narrative appears to leave no room

for an update on Mariam Khan. Her “disappearance” suggests that either Mariam’s transition from land to sea was a smooth one or that Hawkins did not consider her passage important enough to record. If the latter, Hawkins regarded Mariam’s “worth” as less than an Indian commodity.

At any rate, Jahangir offered Hawkins a wife as he would a gift, his initial proposal being “a white Mayden out of his Palace.” According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), the word “Mayden” implies a young woman, girl, or virgin.²⁶ Since Jahangir would have never forwarded one of his relatives, royal women being more likely to be married to fellow Muslims, he might have meant an untouched concubine or slave. Because the unnamed Muslim woman and Mariam Khan are mentioned consecutively, it has been assumed that Mariam Khan, too, emerged from “out of [Jahangir’s] palace,” although Jahangir does not explicitly say so. Mariam might have resided in the imperial household, nonetheless. Memoirs of the Mughals indicate that not all the women of the *haram* were the emperors’ consorts or family. In Akbar’s official biography, *The Ain-i Akbari* (1596), written by Akbar’s courtier and biographer Abul Fazl (1551–1602), the “imperial harem” consisted of 5,000 inhabitants, acknowledged by Fazl as a “large number of women.”²⁷ The 5,000 women included wives, aunts, sisters, cousins, daughters, concubines, slaves, and attendants. Of the wives, Fazl writes that they originated from various states and observed various religions, since marriage was a political endeavor to consolidate the empire: “His Majesty forms matrimonial alliances with princes of Hindustan, and of other countries; and secures by these ties of harmony the peace of the world.” In 1562, Akbar married Rajkumari Hira Kunwari, later known as Mariam uz-Zamani, a Hindu princess and Rajput (a warrior class based in the northwestern state of Rajasthan). She was the mother of Jahangir, himself the husband of several Rajput women, of whom Jagat Gosain was the mother of the next emperor, Shah Jahan (r. 1627–57). Akbar’s wives were permitted to practice the religious rites of their birth, even influencing Akbar in his worship: “His Majesty, from his youth, had also been accustomed to celebrate the *Hom* (a kind of fire-worship) from his affection towards the Hindu princesses of his Harem.”²⁸ Jahangir’s last wife, Noor Jahan, was a Persian, one of the many Persians and other “foreign” Muslims who worked as Mughal attendants. But Jahangir did not grant fellow Muslims exclusive advantage at court and urged non-Muslims to refrain from conversion. Coverté recounts the tale of an Armenian Christian whose adoption of Islam displeased Jahangir: “There was at my being there an Armenian Christian that

in hope of gaine and preferment turned More, which being told the king, he saide, if he thought to save his soule thereby, that was a sufficient Recompence for him, but he would rather have given him preferment if he had kept himselfe still a Christian.”²⁹ This story could validate the view that Mariam Khan, also an Armenian Christian, might have retained her faith if she entered Jahangir’s household or *haram*.

Clearly, the presence of an Armenian Christian in the *haram* would not have been unusual in terms of the many faiths represented and given the politics of gender, privilege, and patronage in the Mughal world; therefore, it is reasonable to think that Mariam, the orphaned daughter of a beloved and rich official, was housed in the *haram* under the emperor’s protection. A Mughal history—Gulbadan Begam’s *The Humayun-nama* (1587)—states that surviving wives and children of men who died in the line of duty were cared for by the empire.³⁰ Noor Jahan became a lady-in-waiting in the *haram* after the death of her first husband, Sher Afghan, and before her marriage to Jahangir. She obtained the position through her father, Ghias Beg, and brother, Asaf Khan, both commanding figures at court. Mariam Khan might have held a similar position in the *haram* upon the passing of Mubarak Khan, even though her mother and brother were still alive. A possible link between the *haram*’s aristocracy and other upper-class housemates concerns the word “Begam.” In Babur’s autobiography, *The Baburnama* (1530), “Begim” and “Khanim” describe the female descendants of Genghis Khan,³¹ but in *The Ain-i Akbari* “Begam” means “the wives of nobles, or other women of chaste character,”³² signifying the development of a more elastic definition. According to the *OED*, “Begum” or “Begam” entered the English language in the early seventeenth century.³³ Since Mariam Khan was the daughter of a “Khan” in good standing with the emperors, she might have been known as “Begam” before and after marriage, since Hawkins, like her father, held the title of “Khan.”

Regarding Mariam Khan’s “race,” if Jahangir did say “a white Mayden” and if “white” expresses Hawkins’s exclusion of African and to an extent Indian heritage, then Jahangir and Hawkins shared a common terminology to explain complexion, assuming that there is a correlation between “race” and “white” in Hawkins’s text. Jahangir respected Hawkins’s preferences, but no such discrimination exists in Jahangir’s autobiography, *The Jahangirnama* (1605–27).³⁴ His wives were Indians and Persians. While Jahangir’s Ottoman counterparts in Turkey accepted only “white” concubines from Greece, Georgia, Circassia, Ukraine, Italy, Russia, the Balkans, and other populaces,³⁵

the Mughals did not employ narrow definitions of “whiteness” applied exclusively to literal “Caucasians” when contracting marriages; however, the argument can be made that for Jahangir (but not for Hawkins) Indians and Persians fell under the category of “white” or common “Indo-European” ancestry. Hence, the emperor’s sundry officials and dependants are not distinguished by “color” but by ethnic background, national origins, and religious persuasion, markers more relevant to the historical complexity and ethnic mosaic of eastern Islamic milieus than Western constructions of “race.”

In contrast, Hawkins’s peers in India frequently label Indians as “white” or “black” irrespective of ethnicity, caste, religion, and depending on the author. For instance, Robert Coverte elides English understanding of phenotype and Mughal terminology. He writes, “The word Mogoll, in their language is as much as to say, the great white king; for he [Jahangir] is a white man and of the Race of Tartares.”³⁶ Coverte’s alignment of “Mogoll,” “white,” and “Tartar” conflicts with “Tartar” as transgressive and associated with a state of “darkness” when Lysander denigrates Hermia as a “tawny Tartar” (3.2.263) in William Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1600).³⁷ However, early modern usage of “Tartar” was complicated and not always pejorative.³⁸ The *OED* suggests that “Tartar,” present in Middle English, came to be synonymous with Central Asians and the Chinese by the sixteenth century,³⁹ allowing for some conflation of “Tartar” and “Mongol,” since the latter was also associated with Central Asians and the Chinese even though Tartars and Mongols are of separate origins: “Mughal” entered the English language as a version of the older “Mogor” that appeared in Hakluyt’s *Principall Navigations* (1598–99) and was applied interchangeably with “Tartar” and “More/Moor” in the context of India.⁴⁰ In India, Babur, founder of the Mughal dynasty and descendant of Genghis Khan (a Mongol) and Timur (a Tartar of Mongol ancestry) self-identified as a “Mughal” to capitalize on his lineage, but Babur’s autobiography, *The Baburnama* (1530), proposes no equation between “Mughal” and “whiteness.” Since Jahangir was only partially “Tartar” and Shah Jahan less so, both being the offspring of Rajput princesses, Coverte’s etymology may not refer to complexion literally but to “whiteness” as a trope for the emperor’s patrilineal Mongol-Tartar heritage, regarded as allied with Christian or “white” virtues when needed. Consider Christopher Marlowe’s two-part drama *Tamburlaine* (1587–88) in which the Scythian conqueror’s physical “whiteness” parallels his sympathy for Christians. Here, as in other relevant examples from early modern drama, such as Shakespeare’s *Othello* (1603), “white” and “black” as “racial” constituents complement the motifs of xenophobia

and miscegenation, but they also depict reputational rise and fall—intertwined with spiritual purity or lack of—as in the Venetian senator's comment to Brabantio, "Your son-in-law is far more fair than black" (1.3.293), and Othello's assessment of Desdemona as being "begrimed and black" (3.3.403).

Covert's view of Jahangir accordingly sheds light on Hawkins's desire for "a white Mayden" as wife. Jahangir's first offer to Hawkins involves a "white" Muslim similar to the emperor himself in appearance, identity, and propensity but with the added bonus of conversion to Christianity. Literary comparisons would be Lucinda in John Fletcher's *The Knight of Malta* (1616) or Donusa in Philip Massinger's *The Renegado* (1624), two "fair" Turkish women who express Christian sentiments and love for a Maltese soldier and Venetian merchant, respectively.⁴¹ Hawkins's rejection of the first proposal and counterchallenge to find "a Christians Daughter" indicate a greater investment in whiteness as a marker of religious and racial lineage, which Hawkins—challenging Covert's assertions—is skeptical of finding among the Mughals. Indeed, Hawkins's real thoughts about the Mughals are acknowledged at the end of his narrative: he is awed but also convinced that they are essentially "faithlesse Infidels."⁴² So Mariam Khan, "a Christian Armenian, and of the Race of the most ancient Christians," more than fulfills Hawkins's criteria for "whiteness" since the Armenians' early adoption of Christianity (older by centuries than the English) made them a distinctive "race" similar to Covert's description of the "Tartars" as a "Race" or community marked by common religious and political histories. However, for Covert, the "white" Mughals typify the aspirations of the English in the east, the upper hand in commerce and the acquisition of riches. Likewise, for Hawkins, Mariam Khan and the money and slaves given with her are her estimated value. "Race," then, for Covert, Hawkins, and other Englishmen in India expresses biological, spiritual, sociological, and financial markers, especially when gender comes into play. As a Mughal woman, Mariam Khan was neither acknowledged by Jahangir nor accepted by Hawkins as entirely destitute, and like other upper-crust Mughal women, she could have refused to wed Hawkins if she wished.⁴³ Since Hawkins put profit first, he probably believed that marrying Mariam Khan was an investment for himself, the joint-stock company that funded his travel, and the English kingdom.

MEMORIALIZING MUGHAL WOMEN

Prior to Mariam Khan's appearance in Hawkins's "Relations of the Occurrents," other Mughal women appear in early modern

documents, both Indian and English. Gulbadan Begam (1523–1603) wrote a biography of her brother, *The Humayunnama* (written in Persian in 1587), in which she lists no fewer than 200 different women and their contributions, among them Hamideh Banu Begam (1527–1604), called Mariam Makani, who was Humayun's wife and Akbar's mother. Akbar's chief wife, Rajkumari Hira Kunwari (1542–1622), known as Mariam uz-Zamani, had the power to issue a *farman*, or official edict,⁴⁴ influenced her husband in his worship, and sponsored trade ships that sailed international waters. In 1613, the Portuguese seized a ship owned by Mariam uz-Zamani that was carrying goods and passengers from Surat to the Red Sea.⁴⁵ William Finch makes reference to this piracy of the Portuguese: "Perhaps on like ground as some Europæans thinke it lawfull to make price [i.e., prize] of the goods and ships of Ethnickes [heathens], *eo nomine*; therefore setting out men of warre, so to make the Christian *name*." Mariam uz-Zamani's business ventures clashed with Westerners on land as well. Finch was present in Bayana in December 1610. Here, he bid successfully, yet unwisely, against Mariam uz-Zamani's agent for indigo. The queen mother complained to Jahangir, causing the emperor to turn on Hawkins, according to a modern commentator.⁴⁶ Hawkins tells a different story. He states that Jahangir permitted the building of an English trading post in Surat, but the emperor withdrew his support when Mughal enemies argued against the decision. It is at this point that Hawkins left India.⁴⁷ Just before Hawkins's fall, Jahangir married Noor Jahan (1577–1645), whose ascendancy benefited her family and briefly Hawkins:

Now one Gaihbeig being the Kings chiefe Treasurer (a man that in outward shew made much of me, & was alwayes willing to pleasure me, when I had occasion to use him) was made chiefe Vizir: and his Daughter marryed with the King, being his chiefe Queene or Paramor. This Vizirs sonne and my selfe were great friends, he having beene often at my house, and was now exalted to high Dignities by the King.⁴⁸

Mariam Khan would have certainly known of Noor Jahan, not to mention Gulbadan Begam, Mariam Makani, and Mariam uz-Zamani. The diligent and respectful portrayals of these Mughal women in *The Baburnama*, *The Humayunnama*, *The Ain-i Akbari*, and *The Jahangirnama* indicate a legacy of empowerment and influence.

The Baburnama, the first known autobiography of a Muslim ruler and written in Chaghatay Turkish, is Babur's military history but also an ancestral record for a particular branch of the Genghis Khan-Timur family, in which women were visible presences. Babur

names his mother, stepmothers, sisters, wives, concubines, daughters, and many other women associated with his relatives and officials and traces each woman's family and fate. Since the region surrounding Ferghana in present-day Uzbekistan—Babur's homeland—was ruled by the numerous descendants of Genghis Khan, who intermarried among themselves, women were key players in determining dynastic relationships, so much so that they were neither forgotten nor forsaken when taken hostage during war. In addition to several aunts and cousins, Babur writes that three of his sisters—Khanzada Begam, Yagdar Sultan Begam, and Ruqayya Sultan Begam—"fell captive" to enemy princes from Afghanistan and Persia. Except for Ruqayya Sultan Begam, who died while in custody, Khanzada and Yagdar were returned to Babur's care, even though Khanzada had been away for ten years; had given birth to a child with her captor, Shaibani Khan; and upon his defeat by Shah Ismail became a hostage of Persia.⁴⁹ Babur's mother, Qutlugh Nigar Khanim, is noted as his constant traveling companion, even during his numerous military campaigns, until her death in 1505.⁵⁰ Qutlugh Nigar Khanim began what would become a common practice: subsequent Mughal emperors were always accompanied by the royal women. The women would set up temporary households near battlefields. In *The Ain-i Akbari*, Fazl mentions that Mariam Makani, Gulbadan Begam, and "other chaste ladies" would be housed in "tents" one hundred yards from Akbar's own pavilion.⁵¹ In 1575, Gulbadan, along with other venerable widows of Mughal princes and officials and several male escorts, made hajj [pilgrimage] to Mecca, sailing from Surat to the Arabian Peninsula, and returning to Fatehpur Sikhri in 1582. While men often controlled the movements of Mughal women, these journeys indicate that they were not permanently confined to the imperial *haram*. Travel—whether by choice or against their will—did not ostracize them, and they were always welcomed upon return, as was Mariam Khan nearly fifty years after Gulbadan.

In this respect, Gulbadan Begam's hajj and her composition of *The Humayunnama* are particularly significant. The events of 1520 to 1525 are missing from *The Baburnama*, so the text does not announce the birth in 1522 of Gulbadan Begam, the daughter of Babur and Dildar Begam later adopted by Maham Begam, Babur's favorite wife and the mother of his successor, Humayun. *The Humayunnama* purposely parallels *The Baburnama* to establish the exploits of Babur and primarily Humayun. While Gulbadan, like Babur, explicates the intricacies of the Mughal family tree, the two texts differ in important ways. Instead of adopting the matter-of-fact tone of her father,

Gulbadan does not hesitate to recall emotional moments, such as her great joy upon reuniting with Babur after his conquest of India: "I fell at his feet; he asked me many questions, and took me for a time in his arms, and then this insignificant person felt such happiness that greater could not be imagined."⁵² Similar passion is recounted upon the death of Maham Begam when Gulbandan was ten years old: "I felt lonely and helpless and in great affliction. Day and night I wept and mourned and grieved." What distinguishes *The Humayunnama* from other Mughal documents is its inclusion of women's perspectives and their roles in history. Mughal aunts, sisters, and cousins were Humayun's staunch supporters and in constant communication with him, from recommending new wives to negotiating with contenders on his behalf. During Humayun's wars of succession with his brothers Hindal and Kamran, Humayun dispatched Khanzada Begam (the aunt formerly held captive by Shaibani Khan and Shah Ismail) to negotiate peace. Humayun's wives were equally impressive. An interesting passage from *The Humayunnama* concerns Humayun's wooing of Hamideh Banu Begam, later known as Mariam Makani and the future Akbar's mother. Gulbadan recounts the first meeting of Humayun and Mariam Makani as marked by instant attraction on the part of Humayun, but the future empress rejected Humayun because he had been deposed and was penniless. Gulbadan's mother Dildar Begam chastised Mariam Makani for refusing the proposal, saying, "Better than a king, who is there?" Mariam Makani responded with a clever retort: "Oh yes, I shall marry someone; but he shall be a man whose collar my hand can touch, and not one whose skirt it does not reach." Mariam Makani eventually accepted Humayun and traveled with him in exile, while pregnant with Akbar, through inhospitable deserts.⁵³

After Humayun's death in 1556, Gulbadan Begam resided in Akbar's *haram* until her own death in 1603. Gulbadan Begam and Mariam Makani were close companions, the most respected women of the *haram*, and confidantes of Akbar, as they had been of Humayun. It was Akbar who urged his aunt to pen *The Humayunnama* and to perform hajj, the encouragement demonstrating his celebration of women's literacy and independence.⁵⁴ Babur and Humayun might have been supportive of women, but Akbar went further in ensuring women's well-being by implementing appropriate policies. Although Akbar embraced many of the cultural norms of Hindu India, he rejected the practice of restricting men and women from viewing each other before marriage. Fazl writes, "His Majesty maintains that the consent of the bride and bridegroom, and the permission of the

parents, are absolutely necessary in marriage contracts.”⁵⁵ To ensure additional protections, Akbar decreed that the couple would submit their histories for inquiry to government investigators or “masters of marriage,” chosen and reimbursed by Akbar. *The Ain-i Akbari* recalls that Akbar also condemned prepubescent marriage as “hurtful” in there being no possibility of issue and the potential break in compatibility once the couple reached adulthood. Akbar outlawed marriage between brother and sister or other “near relations,” although first-cousin marriage was allowed, and he discouraged excessive dowries as unreasonable. Akbar also revised Islamic marriage customs. Polygamy was deemed unwise and unhealthy, and marriages between older women and younger men were discouraged.⁵⁶ Although Akbar did not closely follow his own strictures—he may have had as many as 300 companions, wives, and concubines—some of his marriages were unconventional. Akbar was the first Mughal to marry a Rajput, and Mughal women of the *haram* were permitted to observe the religions of their birth.⁵⁷ This freedom reflected Akbar’s famed religious tolerance in tandem with his belief in the rights of women to be educated, to travel, and to own property.⁵⁸

Akbar’s attitudes toward women set the stage for the next generation of Mughal women to take a more direct role in politics. Of all the Mughal women in the early modern literature of India, Noor Jahan stands out as the most discussed, most admired, most intriguing, and perhaps the most feared. Noor Jahan was Jahangir’s twentieth wife. He married her in 1611, and when Jahangir died in 1627 she outlived her husband by eighteen years. She was born Mehrunnisa in 1577, the daughter of a Persian nobleman, Ghias Beg, who, with his three children (one of whom included Asaf Khan, a backer of Hawkins) and wife, then pregnant with Mehrunnisa, left Safavid Iran for Mughal India. As John Ogilby relates in *Asia, The First Part Being An Accurate Description of Persia and the Several Provinces Thereof: The Vast Empire of the Great Mogol, and Other Parts of India: And their Several Kingdoms and Regions* (1673), “She was a native *Indian*, but of *Persian* Blood, viz. Daughter to a *Persian*, who deserting his native Countrey, came into *India* to serve the *Great Mogol* (as many *Persians* do,) who for the many good Services which he had done him, made him a *Chan* and Vice-Roy of a Province.”⁵⁹ Since the journeys of Mughal women were remembered to confirm the ladies’ strength and influence, Noor Jahan’s prenatal saga—dramatized as an arduous passage over the Hindu Kush mountain range—follows a gendered paradigm that, as Ogilby’s English rendition implies, ennobles her and legitimizes her family. Several decades later, Mariam Khan’s

travels westward, completed in spite of Hawkins's death, are a version of that paradigm and have a similar outcome: Mariam survived and thrived in London. Another connection between Noor Jahan and Mariam revolves around Ogilby's description of Ghias Beg as a "Khan," a title held by both Mubarak Khan and Hawkins, suggesting that at one point Mehrunnisa and Mariam were of the same social class.

In 1594, Mehrunnisa married Sher Afghan, a Mughal official and fellow Persian, and she gave birth to one daughter, Ladli Begam. Upon Sher Afghan's death in 1607, Mehrunnisa entered the Mughal *haram* as a lady-in-waiting.⁶⁰ According to an oft-repeated but probably fictional account, Mehrunnisa caught the eye of Jahangir at a bazaar built for a holiday celebration, and marriage quickly followed. The courtship is retold in Joannes De Laet's *De Imperio Magni Mogolis* [*The Empire of the Great Mughal*], published in Latin in 1631. De Laet (1593–1649), of the Dutch East India Company, provides a compendium of sources about the empire, from boundaries and commodities to peoples and visitors. Even Hawkins is briefly mentioned. Of the book's forty-eight chapters, one is devoted to "Mehrunnisa."⁶¹ No other Mughal woman, not even a male Mughal heir, receives such a spotlight, indicating Noor Jahan's prominence in European eyes. Interestingly enough, De Laet's focus is not her supremacy as "Noor Jahan" but her life as the unattached Mehrunnisa, especially her first meeting with Jahangir, then the crown prince Salim. De Laet implies that the couple's mutual attraction led to marriage, collaboration, and elevation: "The king loved her so deeply that he set her above all his other wives. He made her father commander of 5,000 horse, and bestowed various dignities and offices in the court upon all her relatives."⁶² Ogilby tells a different story. In his narrative, Jahangir met and fell in "love" with Noor Jahan after Sher Afghan's death, and he ordered her to enter his "*Haram* or *Seraglio*, amongst his other Concubines."⁶³ Noor Jahan refused the order, arguing that as the widow and daughter of noblemen, her place was not among the *haram*'s "common Slaves" but as the emperor's "lawful Consort." According to Ogilby, her rejoinder so angered Jahangir that he threatened humiliation by marrying her off to a "*Halalchor*, who are those that without scruple eat of all sorts of Meat, and are the most despicable and scorn'd People of all India," but Noor Jahan's steadfast refusal to become a concubine so impressed Jahangir that he finally consented to marriage and made her "Queen, and chief of all the King's *Haram*."⁶⁴

The issue here is not which source is more accurate in its portrayal of Noor Jahan; rather, the popularity of Jahangir and Noor Jahan's

premarital negotiations functions to substantiate her governance. The romanticized and archetypal elements emphasized in the couple's first encounter—her irresistible beauty, his instant attraction—imply an intimate bond fated to foster power sharing and to level differences of class and gender. Generally Mughal women possessed political clout, but usually through seniority or motherhood and with limitations. Noor Jahan could not ascend through conventional means since she had no children with Jahangir and was a newer member of the *haram*. Nonetheless, she still “broke the glass ceiling,” so to speak. Ogilby corroborates: “This *Schah Selim*, amongst all his Women, had one who was acknowledg'd as a Queen, and being honor'd above all the Ladies of his Court, bore a great sway, nothing being done in the Kingdom but by her Conduct and Power.”⁶⁵ After Jahangir granted Robert Coverte and his companions an official exit visa, which needed to be certified with the emperor's stamp, the Englishmen learned that the stamp was in the possession of Noor Jahan, incorrectly described as Jahangir's “third Queene”: “Then his chiefe Secretary, went with us to his third Queene (for it is said that hee hath ten Queenes, one thousand Concubines, and two hundred Euenuches.) And this Queene is keeper of his great Seale, where it was sealed and delivered unto us.”⁶⁶ François Bernier in *Travels in the Mogul Empire, AD 1656–1668* (1670) goes so far as to depict Noor Jahan as the real sovereign of India, her position being the result of Jahangir's incompetence: “the wife of *Jehan-Guyre*, who so long wielded the scepter, while her husband abandoned himself to drunkenness and dissipation, was known first by the appellation of *Nour-Mehalle*, the Light of the Seraglio, and afterwards by that of *Nour-Jehan-Begum*, the Light of the World.”⁶⁷ Bernier's antifeminist implication that if Jahangir had been a capable monarch then Noor Jahan would not have been dominant belies alternate histories that describe Noor Jahan's power as a product of her own merits, fully endorsed by Jahangir, and not a chance substitution.

Within a few years, Noor Jahan had become Jahangir's chief advisor, and the marriages of Ladli Begam to Jahangir's youngest son Shahriyar and Anjumand Banu (later called Mumtaz Mahal and daughter of Asaf Khan) to Khurram, the future Shah Jahan, cemented Noor Jahan's place in the lineage of power. References to Noor Jahan in *The Jahangirnama* show that the emperor respected, trusted, and admired her, and he rewarded her lavishly. She received the title “light of the world” in 1616, by decree of Jahangir, whose memoir announces, “Around this time [March 20, 1616] I ordered Nurmahall [“light of the palace”] to be called Nurjahan Begam.”⁶⁸ Noor Jahan possessed Ramsar, a *jagir* or tithe of land from which she received an

income. In 1616, during a journey from Ajmer in Rajasthan to Malwa, east of Agra, Jahangir, Noor Jahan, and their retinue passed through Ramsar, where Jahangir honored his favorite wife by hosting revels. During the same journey, Noor Jahan had the opportunity to display her marksmanship—she neatly shot a small bird with a musket—but it was in 1617, when Jahangir took the women of the *haram* on a lion hunt, that Noor Jahan's skill became apparent. Jahangir's retainers had captured four lions for the emperor to kill. Noor Jahan asked Jahangir if she could dispose of the lions, and when given permission to do so, she capably killed the animals. Jahangir writes admiringly, "In the twinkling of an eye the four lions were deprived of life with six shots. Until now such marksmanship had not been seen—from atop an elephant and from inside a howdah she had fired six shots, not one of which missed, and four such adversaries had not even had a chance to budge. As a reward for such marksmanship I scattered a thousand ashrafis [gold coins] over her head and gave her a pair of pearls and a diamond worth a lac of rupees." Jahangir confided in Noor Jahan exclusively. In 1614, when deathly ill with fever, Jahangir kept his condition hidden from everyone except Noor Jahan. As the following excerpt from the *Jahangirnama* reveals, Jahangir put his utmost trust and his fate in her hands: "I made no one of the harem privy to this state other than Nurjahan Begam, the one I thought had more affection for me than any other."⁶⁹

Like Noor Jahan, Mariam Khan was intensely loyal to her husband. When Hawkins decided to leave India, he was met with immediate resistance from Mariam's family: "But when my Wifes Mother, & Kindred saw that I was to carry her away, suspecting that they should never see her any more, they did so distaste me in these my travels, that I was forced to yeeld unto them, that my Wife go no further then Goa, because it was India: and that they could goe and come and visit her, and that, if at any time I meant to goe for Portugall, or any other-where, that I leave her that portion, that the custome of Portugall is, to leave to their Wives when they dye."⁷⁰ Since the family demanded her "maintenance," they were either fiscally savvy or culturally observant, the latter a result of stated "custome." Hawkins describes being "forced to yeeld" "to prevent all mischiefs." He never followed through on the delivery of the money, however, since he calculated that Mariam's willingness to accompany him—"she being willing to goe where I went, and live as I lived"—would make the contract with her family "of no effect."⁷¹ If it was her decision to follow Hawkins, at the cost of rejecting her family and forsaking her country, Mariam Khan was a woman confident of her future with a man who was "foreign," yet whose

stated independence may have aligned with her own: Hawkins tells the Portuguese that he values the freedom to “stay or goe, when I pleased with free libertie of conscience for my selfe.”⁷² Likewise, Mariam Khan, an exemplary Mughal woman, controlled her own destiny.

Intriguingly, there is no further mention of Mariam Khan in the final portion of “Relations of the Occurrents.” Hawkins is preoccupied with his “Goods,” damaged when his ship ran aground near Sumatra. This resulted in his sending his collection with the *Salomon*, though he could not get passage for himself. Hawkins managed to persuade the captain of the *Thomas* to follow the *Salomon* so that he could watch his property. The narrative ends abruptly near the Cape of Good Hope. Did Mariam Khan vanish from the end of Hawkins’s piece because once she stepped foot on ship her status eroded from identifiable Mughal woman of independence and wealth to an invisible English wife with limited legal rights? Did this shift in status put her on par with or less than Hawkins’s Indian “Commodities”?⁷³ Did her “worth” become only as much as her tangible assets? For Hawkins, in addition to her religion and “race,” wealth was a factor in Mariam Khan’s attractiveness. Conforming to East India Company regulations, Hawkins in his narrative spends considerable time providing a catalogue of Jahangir’s gold, jewels, palaces, and elephants, and implies that Jahangir’s favored officials received opulent gifts, a fact confirmed in *The Jahangirnama*, but he describes Mariam’s remaining assets as “but only a few Jewels.” His servant, Nicholas Ufflet, later testified to the East India Company in London that Mariam had in her possession 6,000 pounds sterling worth of gems.⁷⁴ In contrast, as Jahangir’s courtier, Hawkins’s income was only 3,200 pounds sterling per year.⁷⁵ Mariam Khan appears briefly in the East India Company records when she seeks “alimony” from her second husband, Towerson, but thereafter English and Mughal sources are silent, and Mariam disappears from the historical record. Yet, half a century later, upon the widespread news of Towerson’s “martydom” in southeast Asia, Mariam Khan was resurrected and revised in the form of the tragic Ysabinda in Dryden’s play *Amboyna, or the Cruelties of the Dutch to the English Merchants* (1673); concomitantly, as we shall see, Mughal women are trivialized in his *Aurang-Zebe* (1675) through the irrational character of “Nourmahal,” loosely based on the historical Noor Jahan.

MIMICKING MUGHAL WOMEN

Forty years earlier, Thomas Herbert’s *A Relation of Some Years Travaile into Afrique, Asia, and Indies* (1634) foreshadows Noor

Jahan as a one-dimensional figure with the obsessive and ultimately self-destructive motive to advance her fortunes. Herbert details the struggle for succession following Jahangir's death and Noor Jahan's role in the conflict. According to Herbert, Jahangir's nomination of his grandson "*Sultan Blockee*" (Dawar Bakhsh, the child of Jahangir's oldest son, Khusrau) to be the next emperor, seconded by Asaf Khan, was a temporary ploy to allow "*Curroone*" (Khurram, married to Asaf Khan's daughter Anjumand Banu) enough support for the throne. The announcement caused Noor Jahan to be "almost distracted," she having promoted Shahriyar, her own daughter's husband:

Fearing her devices to Crowne *Seriare* her Sonne (and youngest to *Iangheer*) would be preuented, but assuring her selfe, feare nor wishes without action could performe it, shee assumes courage and with those forces, she then had (which she euer kept about her for her safety) she hoped to effect her long desires, which was to seaze upon *Blockee*, the new King, and upon her Brother *Assaph Chawne*, whom shee resolved to strangle, knowing hee was euer against her Sonne *Seriare*.⁷⁶

Noor Jahan's leadership of a personal army, one prepared to eliminate enemies upon her command, is proof of her unique authority in the Mughal Empire and the "ambitious qualities" that made her plan the assassination of her own brother, Asaf Khan, himself an influential grandee. When Asaf Khan's army ambushed the combined forces of Shariyar and Noor Jahan, paving the way for Khurram to become emperor, Noor Jahan's era of greatness ended. As Shah Jahan, Khurram stripped her of status: "But when *Currone* came to be Emperour, he tooke her Army from her, ransackt her treasures, slue her friends, and confined her to a priuate Castle for her life, where now she liues in no small misery."⁷⁷ The once omnipotent queen was marginalized to the frontiers of the empire, where she died of old age. For Herbert, Noor Jahan's intervention is reduced to inappropriate meddling in political affairs that should be the exclusive arena of men.

As mentioned earlier, the manipulated memorialization of Mughal women, together with positive portrayals in Mughal biographies and autobiographies, contribute to the ambivalent depictions in early modern drama, specifically Dryden's *Amboyna* and *Aurang-Zebe*, where Mughal women are represented as either powerless or power hungry.⁷⁸ In *Amboyna*, Ysabinda, like Mariam Khan, is "[a]n *Indian* lady," according to the cast of characters. Both are the wives of Gabriel Towerson. It would seem that the commonalties end here, given that

Ysabinda did not immigrate to England, as Mariam did, and Ysabinda does not profess any political contacts. However, the two women are related in subtle ways. Ysabinda is, after all, a princess who defies her family to convert to Christianity and marry Towerson, and she is in some possession of influence and affluence, certainly attractive to both the English and the Dutch. There are shades of Mariam Khan in Ysabinda when Fiscall, mastermind of Ysabinda's rape by Harman Junior, advises, "Pursue your end, that's to enjoy the Woman, and her / Wealth" (2.1.154–5). Although Ysabinda is bound to Towerson, Harman Junior's need to possess her merges with the play's recurring motif of colonial "Trade" when he offers Towerson a trade-off—"all the Traffick of these Eastern parts" (2.1.79–80)—if Towerson "yield *Ysabinda* to me" (2.1.75).⁷⁹ Ysabinda's response to Harman Junior is unambiguous: she rejects all his advances and remains devoted to Towerson, sitting by his grave until her own death.

If we understand Mariam Khan as a Mughal woman of action and definite opinions, then Ysabinda certainly matches her. She is direct about the corruption of her home country, which she sees as a parallel to her own violation:

No longer Bridegroom thou, nor I a Bride . . . do not touch me; I am all polluted, all shame, all o'er dishonour; fly my sight, and, for my sake, fly this detested Isle, where horrid Ills so black and fatal dwell, as *In-dians* cou'd not guess, till *Europe* taught. (4.5.12–7)

Here, Ysabinda believes that if Towerson is quarantined from her, he will be spared the Dutch contagion that led to her rape; however, in her own fall and that of Amboyna, she does not entirely exonerate him. Her revelation is that the English and Dutch should be held responsible for the introduction of sin and death to the otherwise innocent "Indian" islanders. Similar to Ysabinda, Nourmahal is wronged and outspoken, and her feistiness has a foundation in the famed Noor Jahan. Nourmahal unequivocally protests being cast aside by her husband, incorrectly noted as Shah Jahan, due to his attraction for Indamora, who, along with another woman, Melesinda, are versions of Ysabinda in their virtuousness. As she argues,

You wrong me first, and urge my rage to rise,
Then I must pass for mad; you, meek and wise,
Good man, please merit by your soft replies.
Vain privileged poor Women have of tongue:
Men can stand silent, and resolve on wrong. (2.1.244–8)

Nourmahal's lament is moderated by her transgressive attraction for her stepson Aurang-Zebe (another error on Dryden's part, as Aurang-Zebe was Noor Jahan's grand-nephew). Aurang-Zebe rejects Nourmahal and marries Indamora, after which Nourmahal commits suicide. As the rebellious consort of a Muslim emperor, she is caricatured, whereas the fate of the idealized Ysabinda, Christian convert and Englishman's wife, is noble martyrdom. As Shah Jahan himself says about Nourmahal, "A Spirit so untam'd the world ne'r bore" (2.1.376).⁸⁰

Both Ysabinda and Nourmahal are refracted representations of Mughal women, examples not of "mimesis," forwarded by Philip Sidney in his 1595 essay, "The Defense of Poesy," to be the function of art, but of "mimicry," taken here to mean Homi Bhabha's critique of the colonized subject's posturing as well as Dryden's interpretation of Indian women. An Ambonese princess prior to her engagement to Towerson, Ysabinda's life was likely subscribed by the customs of the southeast's rising Islamic framework, but with the decision to "become English," Ysabinda transforms herself, "mimicking" an Englishwoman who arrives in Amboyna, even sharing clothes with her:

Come Country woman; I must call you so, since he who owns my Heart is *English* born; be not dejected at your wretched Fortune, my House is yours, my Cloaths shall Habit you, even these I wear, rather then see you thus. (3.3.152–5)

Mimicry dictates Nourmahal's insistence on her entitlement since losing her place in the emperor's heart. In a lengthy letter to the Earl of Mulgrave, which prefaces the play, Dryden explains the creative reasoning behind the women of *Aurang-Zebe*: "The procedure of *Indamora* and *Melesinda*, seems yet, in my judgment, natural, and not unbecoming of their Characters . . . And I shall be glad, for the honour of my Countrey, to find better Images of Virtue drawn to the life in their behaviour, than any I could feign to adorn the Theatre."⁸¹ Melesinda, he states, functions "in opposition to Nourmahal," Nourmahal being a more realistic figure of the Indian woman: "Those *Indian Wives* are loving Fools, and may do well to keep themselves in their own Countrey, or, at least, to keep company with the *Arria's* and *Portia's* of old *Rome*."⁸²

The disparate references to Mughal women in early modern literature of India indicate that their legacy is a complicated but noteworthy mosaic requiring assemblage and recovery. Acknowledging the role of Mariam Khan allows for a more complete study of William Hawkins.

Dissecting Mughal chronicles against European diaries and imaginative literature permits comparison and comprehensive examination. Even for postcolonial literature on the Mughal era, the past cannot be reevaluated without a reassessment of women's histories. For instance, although Salman Rushdie's *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008) introduces Qara Kōz, a Timurid princess who bravely goes—first as a captive, then as a mistress—from Uzbekistan to Persia, then to Turkey, Italy, and finally the Americas, other Mughal women in the novel are stereotyped as gossiping matrons, suicidal sex objects, and unpredictable poltergeists.⁸³ Qara Kōz is briefly mentioned in *The Baburnama* as one of the wives of Babur's father, not as Babur's sister as Rushdie renders her.⁸⁴ In re-creating Qara Kōz, Rushdie takes creative liberties with the trials of Khanzada Begam, as well as the commentary on Gulbadan Begam, Mariam Makani, and Mariam uz-Zamani in the annals of the Mughals. Rushdie, like Dryden, both empowers and compromises Mughal women, thereby rewriting them, for better and for worse. In the final analysis, a composite picture of Mughal women collected from multiple genres in England and the Mughal Empire establishes that Mariam Khan and her Mughal sisters' contributions in life and to literature remain relevant to exchanges between India and England, Islam and Christianity, East and West, fiction and nonfiction.

NOTES

1. Writing about Mariam Khan arose from a conversation with Bernadette Andrea on the necessity to extract composite pictures of early modern women from fragmented references. In 2009, I presented subsequent findings at the Shakespeare Association of America Convention, Washington DC, and the Attending to Early Modern Women Conference, the University of Maryland, College Park. I thank Saint Anselm College for awarding me a summer research grant to work on the topic. My daughter, Mira Saldanha, whose birth and spirit further inspired me to explore women and power, deserves my gratitude as well.
2. See Robert Markley, *The Far East and the English Imagination, 1600–1730* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 162.
3. For a review of the Armenian community in India, beginning in 780 CE in the southern state of Kerala and continuing in the thriving “commercial settlement” they formed in Agra under the Mughals, as well as the Armenian version of Mariam Khan's history, see Mesrobian J. Seth, *History of the Armenians in India* (Piscataway, New Jersey: Gorgias, 2004), 22–5.

4. Michael H. Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism: Indian Travellers and Settlers in Britain, 1600–1857* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004), 22–9.
5. See Ania Loomba, “Of Gifts, Ambassadors, and Copy-Cats: Diplomacy, Exchange, and Difference in Early Modern India,” in *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture: Mediation, Transmission, and Traffic, 1550–1700* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2009), 41–76; Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London’s Theatre of the East, 1576–1626* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Pompa Banerjee, *Burning Women: Widows, Witches, and Early Modern European Travelers in India* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Shankar Raman, *Framing “India”: The Colonial Imaginary in Early Modern Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002); John Michael Archer, *Old Worlds: Egypt, Southwest Asia, India, and Russia in Early Modern English Writing* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); Jyotsna G. Singh, *Colonial Narratives/Cultural Dialogues: Discoveries of India in the Language of Colonialism* (New York: Routledge, 1996).
6. For literary approaches, see Bernadette Andrea, *Women and Islam in Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), and Andrea, “Lady Sherley: The ‘First’ Persian in England?” *The Muslim World* 95.2 (2005): 279–95. For historical studies, see Ruby Lal, *Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) and Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
7. All citations are from William Hawkins, “Captaine William Hawkins, his Relations of the Occurrents which happened in the time of his residence in India, in the Country of the Great Mogoll, and of his departure from thence; written to the Company,” in *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes*, vol. 3, ed. Samuel Purchas (New York: AMS, 1965), 1–51.
8. Hawkins, “Captaine William Hawkins, his Relations of the Occurrents,” 12.
9. Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, 148.
10. Wheeler M. Thackston, “Translator’s Preface,” *The Jahangirnāma: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*, ed. Wheeler M. Thackston (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), xxiii–xxiv.
11. For a selection of such accounts, see William Foster, ed., *Early Travels in India 1583–1619* (Delhi: S. Chand, 1968), and Michael H. Fisher, ed., *Visions of Mughal India: An Anthology of European Travel Writing* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
12. Hawkins and his English cohorts engaged Mughal India as new supplicants, clearly not as experienced in Eastern trade as the Portuguese, who had entered India in 1498 and conquered Goa, their regional capital, by 1510, a full one hundred years before Hawkins’s arrival.

13. Foster, *Early Travels in India*, 8.
14. Ibid., 18, 56, 55–7.
15. Robert Coverte, *A True and Almost Incredible Report of an Englishman* (1612) (New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), 35.
16. Foster, *Early Travels in India*, 123, 146.
17. Coverte, *A True and Almost Incredible Report*, 40.
18. Ibid., 36, 41.
19. Hawkins, “Captaine William Hawkins, his Relations of the Occurrents,” 14.
20. Ibid., 14, 38.
21. Coverte, *A True and Almost Incredible Report*, 42.
22. Foster, *Early Travels in India*, 148.
23. Hawkins, “Captaine William Hawkins, his Relations of the Occurrents,” 15.
24. Ibid.
25. Lal, *Domesticity and Power*, 4. The word *zenana* also refers to the Indian harem but appeared first in eighteenth-century English.
26. *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), 2nd ed. (1989), s.v. “Maiden.”
27. Abul Fazl, *The Ain-i Akbari*, trans. H. Blochmann (Delhi: Aadiresh Book Depot, 1965), 45, 47.
28. Ibid., 45, 193.
29. Coverte, *A True and Almost Incredible Report*, 40.
30. Gulbadan Begam, *The History of Humayun (Humayun-nama)*, trans. Annette S. Beveridge (Delhi: Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delli, 1972), 179.
31. See “Selected Glossary” in Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur, *The Baburnama: Memoirs of Babur, Prince and Emperor*, ed. Wheeler M. Thackston (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 451–2.
32. Fazl, *The Ain-i Akbari*, 47.
33. OED, s.v. “Begam.”
34. See Nur-ud-Din Salim Jahangir, *The Jahangirnama: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*, ed. Wheeler M. Thackston (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).
35. For a study of white “Turkish” women, see Bindu Malieckal, “Slavery, Sex, and the Seraglio: ‘Turkish’ Women in Early Modern Texts,” in *The Mysterious and The Foreign in Early Modern England*, eds. Helen Ostovich, Mary V. Silcox, and Graham Roebuck (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 58–73.
36. Coverte, *A True and Almost Incredible Report*, 39.
37. All quotations are from David Bevington, ed., *The Necessary Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. (New York: Pearson Longman, 2005).
38. See Bernadette Andrea, “Persia, Tartaria, and Pamphilia: Ideas of Asia in Mary Wroth’s *The Countess of Montgomery’s Urania*, Part II,” in *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*, eds. Debra Johanyak and Walter S. H. Lim (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 23–50.

39. *OED*, s.v. "Tartar."
40. *OED*, s.v. "Mughal."
41. See Bindu Malieckal, "'Wanton Irreligious Madness': Conversion and Castration in Massinger's *The Renegado*," *Essays in Arts and Sciences* 31 (2002): 25–43, and Malieckal, "'Hell's Perfect Character': The Black Woman as The Islamic Other in Fletcher's *The Knight of Malta*," *Essays in Arts and Sciences* 28 (1999): 53–68.
42. Hawkins 26. Also see Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, for more detailed information on the English "embassy" of Thomas Roe in Jahangir's India.
43. Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism*, 24.
44. See S. A. I. Tirmizi, *Edicts from the Mughal Harem* (Delhi: Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delli, 1979). Mariam Makani and Noor Jahan also had the authority to issue a *farman* and other types of edicts. Most concerned the collection of revenue from land holdings.
45. Foster, *Early Travels in India*, 191.
46. *Ibid.*, 147, 151, 123.
47. Hawkins, "Captaine William Hawkins, his Relations of the Occurrents," 25–6.
48. *Ibid.*, 25.
49. Babur, *The Baburnama*, 43.
50. *Ibid.*, 46.
51. Fazl, *The Ain-i Akbari*, 49.
52. Gulbadan Begam, *The History of Humayun*, 102.
53. *Ibid.*, 116, 160–1, 151, 155.
54. Lal, *Domesticity and Power*, 57, 67.
55. Fazl, *The Ain-i Akbari*, 287.
56. *Ibid.*, 287–8. The last is inconsistent with Islamic precedent, since the Prophet Mohammad's first wife Khadijah was almost twenty years his senior, and the Prophet had approximately ten wives subsequently.
57. Lal, *Domesticity and Power*, 216.
58. For an analysis of Akbar's religious sentiments, see Bindu Malieckal, "As Good As Gold: India, Akbar the Great, and Marlowe's *Tamburlaine Plays*," in *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*, eds. Debra Johanyak and Walter S. H. Lim (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 131–60.
59. John Ogilby, *Asia, The First Part Being An Accurate Description of Persia and the Several Provinces Thereof. The Vast Empire of the Great Mogol, and Other Parts of India: And their Several Kingdoms and Regions* (London, 1673), 169.
60. Ellison Banks Findly, *Nur Jahan: Empress of Mughal India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 32.
61. All quotations are from Joannes de Laet, *The Empire of the Great Mogol*, trans. J. S. Hoyland (Delhi: Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delli, 1975), 182.
62. de Laet, *The Empire of the Great Mogol*, 182.

63. Ogilby, *Asia*, 169.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Coverte, *A True and Almost Incredible Report*, 41–2.
67. François Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire, AD 1656–1668*, ed. Archibald Constable (Delhi: S. Chand, 1968), 5.
68. Jahangir, *Jahangirnama*, 190.
69. Ibid., 203, 206, 219, 161.
70. Hawkins, “Captaine William Hawkins, his Relations of the Occurrents,” 23.
71. Ibid., 16, 23. Hawkins’s surreptitious travel arrangements include, from the Portuguese at Goa, “an absolute grant of free passage into Portugall, and so for England, with my Wife and Goods, without any disturbances of any of my Wives friends: and what agreements I made with them to be void and of none effect, but I should stay or goe, when I pleased with free libertie of conscience for my selfe” (24). At this point, Mariam Khan’s brother had been living with the couple in Goa. Hawkins dispatches him to Agra on a false pretext and then spirits himself, his wife, and property away on an English ship.
72. Ibid., 24.
73. Ibid., 3.
74. Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism*, 26.
75. Hawkins, “Captaine William Hawkins, his Relations of the Occurrents,” 13.
76. Thomas Herbert, *A Relation of Some Years Travaile into Afrique, Asia, and Indies* (New York: Da Capo, 1634), 31.
77. Ibid., 33–4.
78. All quotations are from Vinton A. Dearing, ed., *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 12 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
79. For a discussion of *Amboyna* and trade, see Ayanna Thompson, *Performing Race and Torture on the Early Modern Stage* (New York: Routledge, 2008).
80. For a study of India and Dryden’s *Aurang-Zebe*, see Ros Ballaster, *Fabulous Orient: Fictions of the East in England, 1662–1785* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).
81. John Dryden, “To the Right Honourable, John, Earl of Musgrave, Gentleman of his Majesty’s Bed-Chamber, and Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter,” in *The Works of John Dryden*, 12: 156.
82. Ibid.
83. Salman Rushdie, *The Enchantress of Florence* (New York: Random House, 2008).
84. Babur, *The Baburnama*, 16, 199.

CHAPTER 6



“BY MY OWNE EXPERIENCE OR THE MOST PROBABLEST RELATION OFF OTHERS”: MANUSCRIPT TRAVEL WRITING AND PETER MUNDY’S “RELATION” OF CONSTANTINOPLE (1617–20)

Philip S. Palmer

In his chapter on “The Literature of Travel” in the *Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, Michael Brennan asserts that scholars of early modern travel literature must not neglect the “crucial importance” of manuscript narratives, “which far exceeded the production of printed books” in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England.¹ While much of this manuscript material remains understudied, literary scholars have started to tap into the wealth of primary sources in recent work on Anglo-Ottoman relations, as evinced by Michael Brennan’s own *The Travel Journal of Robert Bargrave, Levant Merchant, 1647–1656* (1999), Gerald MacLean’s discussion of Thomas Dallam in *The Rise of Oriental Travel* (2004), and Anna Suranyi’s use of various manuscript sources in her recent book *The Genius of the English Nation* (2008).²

Despite the attention given to travel manuscripts, scholars have tended to focus primarily on content rather than on a manuscript’s

production and circulation as a physical object. The lack of such approaches to early modern English travel manuscripts reflects a general absence of work dedicated to the textual and book historical features of the period's travel literature. In brief, these features are complex. Michael Brennan has noted travel literature's "generic eclecticism," demonstrating that most of these texts occupy a grey area between literature, history, geography, ethnography, and science.³ Furthermore, complicated authorship situations or textual histories make early modern travel books difficult to categorize. Since writers produced these texts through several distinct stages—a process that could include note-taking during travel; expanding notes into fuller narratives; inserting material from other authors; preparing fair copy for presentation or publication; copying of manuscripts for circulation; adding paratextual material; revising or expanding the text for new printed editions; refashioning the text for compilations, and so on—the travel account resisted fixity, its textual form being capable of extensive refashioning and repackaging.⁴ The fact that different writers could produce competing narratives of a single travel experience for different purposes and audiences complicated this basic process even further. Considering the generic, textual, and bibliographic complexities of the period's travel literature, directing questions of book history toward the genre could help reveal how such texts were produced, circulated, and read in early modern England. Understanding the mechanisms of these textual and material pressures can help us elucidate the social role of early modern travel literature and its representation of intercultural contact.

In this essay I analyze a seventeenth-century English travel narrative not merely as a written text, but as a manuscript book adopting a specific material form, a form that in turn illuminates how authors wrote about the Ottoman Empire in early modern England. The voluminous manuscript (ranging from 1608 to 1667) of Peter Mundy, East India Company merchant, contains an account of his stay at Constantinople from 1617 to 1620.⁵ This section of the "*Itinerarium Mundii*" is not as expansive as its descriptions of India or China, mainly because he neglected to write down his observations during this early voyage. Since the extant text of "Relation I" (the account of Constantinople) derives from two sessions of memorial reconstruction, the creation of an expansive supplement, and the excerpting of passages from contemporary writers, Mundy's relation of the Ottoman capital survives as an unpolished and piecemeal record. The author clearly regretted his failure to record any observations of Constantinople during his stay there, but his attempts at

reconstructing this experience many years later have preserved an important material witness to the process involved in creating a travel text. Because its textual complexity documents the traces of its composition, the manuscript affords modern readers a glimpse at the authorial decisions that shaped Mundy's book and could have shaped other contemporary travel accounts.

Moreover, by including extracts from the writings of George Sandys, Henry Blount, Samuel Purchas, and other early modern English travel writers, Mundy provides his readers with a short reference guide to English books on the Turks. This invaluable example of an enumerative bibliography aligns certain topics related to the Ottoman Empire with specific works, perhaps illustrating the actual reading practices associated with ethnographic texts of the time. Since it is probable that he extracted passages from books found in his own library, the manuscript itself became a key to those books, enabling his friends (one of the manuscript's intended audiences) to learn about the world through an intertextual network of knowledge centered on his Cornwall home. But the manuscript was also a personal reference guide, bridging the divide between the author's memory and the wealth of knowledge stored in his library and travel experiences. Figured as a "memorial" on the title page, Mundy's book functioned as a material repository for its author's memories, carefully preserving not only his travels but also his intellectual relationship to those experiences as he revised and expanded his manuscript over many years.

It was Mundy's account of Constantinople, his earliest travel experience, that would capture his imagination the most during a bout of revision from 1649 to 1650, three decades after he visited the Ottoman capital. His personal investment in experiencing Constantinople came full circle during this period of revision and expansion, at which point he wrote a comparison between his home village of Penryn, Cornwall, and the great Ottoman metropolis. In writing this description, Mundy bridged the great geographic and cultural divides between English town and Ottoman city, forming an intercultural bond in both his imagination and memory. In short, the manuscript evidence for Mundy's expansion of the Constantinople account not only documents one of the many textual processes involved in writing travel literature, but also demonstrates that personal memory and the effect of passing time—traces of which adhere to the very pages of the book—were crucial factors in determining an English travel writer's relationship with and representation of the Ottoman Empire.

THE MANUSCRIPT

Mundy's manuscript, a vellum-bound folio volume of 510 leaves, currently resides in the Bodleian Library's Rawlinson Collection and was edited by Sir Richard Carnac Temple and Lavinia Mary Anstey for the Hakluyt Society between 1907 and 1936.⁶ Composed, expanded, and revised over a period of forty-seven years, the manuscript features a wonderful variety of topical and textual features reflecting the wide range of Mundy's experiences. The travel writer adorned his book with 117 curious illustrations, all products of the author's pen, depicting subjects as diverse as chopsticks, "strange crabbes," and a whale in the Thames. Mundy also utilized the manuscript as a scrapbook by pasting plates and maps from printed books onto its blank pages.⁷ The manuscript's contents became even more miscellaneous while its author was living in England in the 1640s, early 1650s, and 1660s, when he wrote prolifically in the book to stave off idleness and boredom.⁸ Its varied content and complicated textual history lend Mundy's travel manuscript a fascinating sense of hybridity and multiplicity.

Mundy traveled for nearly sixty years, mainly in the professional capacity of a merchant but also as a casual traveler. He recorded this lengthy itinerary, which ranged from Cornwall to Sumatra, from Holland to Japan, carefully (and obsessively) over several distinct textual stages. While neglecting to record any observations during his earliest travels (including his stay in Constantinople), he made the effort to reconstruct them from memory en route to and from India in 1629 and 1634, respectively. Starting in 1620 he began keeping a regular journal of his travels, to which he would later add the written memories of his earlier voyages. Upon his return to England in 1634, he gave a copy of his manuscript to Sir Paul Pindar (former ambassador to Constantinople) and left the original in the safekeeping of his father.⁹

A year later Mundy was off again, bound for India and Japan. Although he had requested that his father send the manuscript to him in London before he departed for Asia, the book never made it back to its owner, a unfortunate fate that Mundy attributes to his father "lending itt to one or other" (I.2).¹⁰ Yet the traveler's writing did not cease. He started a new journal during his East Asian voyage that would ultimately become the definitive manuscript account of his travels. Upon his return to England in 1638, he learned that the copy of his original manuscript remained in the possession of Sir Paul Pindar. Mundy carefully recopied it into his new travel journal, adding and

revising material as he went along.¹¹ It was between 1638 and 1640 (when he left England again for Europe) that Mundy probably wrote the “preface” to his manuscript, which I will discuss in more depth later. During his northern European travels from 1640 to 1647, it is likely that he kept the manuscript in his possession, probably taking preliminary notes that he would later copy and expand into the main book. In 1649, he began revising and expanding, adding a “supplement to Relation I” to flesh out the account of his early experiences in Constantinople. After completing another long voyage to India from 1655 to 1656, he spent the remainder of his life in England, adding various appendices and indefatigably recording his observations.

Mundy’s preface holds inestimable importance for understanding the manuscript’s intended purpose and audience. In this section he describes his text as composed of journal entries, memorially reconstructed relations, and descriptions borrowed from contemporaries. Unlike many early modern travel writers who freely borrowed without acknowledgement from other books, themselves frequently of suspect authority, Mundy assures his readers that the book’s contents stem entirely from his own observations or the reliable accounts of others: “I have endeavored to com as Near the truth off the Matters Discribed as possibly I could attain unto by my owne experience or the Most probablest Relation off others” (I.6).¹² When describing the “Journall Wise” sections of the text, he reveals his twofold purpose for keeping the travel manuscript: “to keepe my owne remembrance oon occasion off Discourse concerning particularities off thes voyages, As allsoe to pleasure such Freinds (who mightt come to the reading thereof) Thatt are Desirous to understand somwhatt off Forraigne Countries” (I.3). This statement suggests that the manuscript was intended primarily for private reference and coterie circulation, and probably not for print as one historian has opined.¹³

The preface affords other interesting perspectives on Mundy’s relationship to his work, including an apology that he had “no skill in portraiture” (even though his drawings are passable) and a praise of travel writing as an honorable pastime comparable to “[m]usicke, painting, histories, civill Discours, etts” (I.5–6). Near the end of the preface Mundy describes his dedication to recording new or uncommon knowledge, placing himself firmly among the period’s proponents of empirical observation: “I doe confesse the Matter to bee Meane and the phrase and Decorum Suiteable, yett full off variety and such as Most part thereof not (as I conceive) to bee Found in other Writings” (I.5).

“BY MY OWN EXPERIENCE”: THE ACCOUNT OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Contrary to the assessment of “D. G. H.”—who in an early-twentieth-century book review dismissed Mundy’s work since “he does not strike us as an observer who was qualified to add much to our knowledge”¹⁴—the “*Itinerarium Mundii*” abounds with information on English, European, and Asian culture in the seventeenth century. Although some of the manuscript’s more expansive relations, such as those dedicated to India (1629–34) and northern Europe (1640–47), contain hundreds of pages of fascinating and historically valuable observations, the much shorter account of Mundy’s three-year stay in Constantinople (1617–20) is important in its own right. Before considering its textual or bibliographical value, one should note that Mundy’s “relation” of Constantinople articulates yet another nuanced and ambivalent account of the Ottoman Empire in the early seventeenth century. As a well-connected merchant residing at Pera, Mundy seemed to have little interest in antagonizing or proselytizing the locals and had no reason to complain about his stay:

Heere the English Merchants passe verie Commodiousley with pleasure, love and Amitye amonge themselves, wearinge our owne Countrie habitt. Provision, fruite, and Wyne very good varietye and plentie. Heere I remained about three yeares. (I.22)

For the most part, Mundy’s sparse observations of the Ottoman capital are highly conventional; like every other European traveler, he saw the major sights of the city, noted the sporadic outbreaks of disease, and admired the tactical advantage afforded by the city’s harbor. But Mundy also recorded unique observations of English diplomatic ceremonies at the Ottoman court (I.36), in addition to illustrating Turkish “amusements” practiced at the “Feast of Biram” (I.58).¹⁵

Although the importance of Mundy’s relation of Constantinople in part stems from its content, its real value lies in its textual and bibliographical qualities. Since Mundy made no written records during his actual stay in the Ottoman capital, the observations that comprise “Relation One” (London to Constantinople, 1617–20) stem from various phases of writing that postdated the travel experience in question. Mundy’s account is an aggregate of disparate moments of writing, revising, and editing, a textual hybrid that nonetheless achieves unity as a “relation” of Constantinople. Since in printed travel accounts the intricacies of textual assemblage typically remain invisible, it is difficult to analyze the compositional methods underlying the production

of the genre. But by exploring the history of Mundy's account as a physical book, it is possible to "anatomize" the travel narrative, so to speak, and illuminate the range of textual practices travel writers used to represent the Ottoman Empire in seventeenth-century England.

As I have mentioned earlier, Mundy recorded nothing concerning his earliest journeys (1608–20) until 1629 and 1634. The base text for his account of the Ottoman capital derives entirely from memorial reconstruction and contains a negligible amount of information.¹⁶ In the later "Supplement to Relation I," Mundy recalls this early stage in the textual genesis of the account in a slightly dismissive tone: "Concerning Constantinople, where I remayned three or four years, I tooke no notice of any thing untill my departure thence, and what I have don since is but course and Coursary" (I.25). This statement suggests that Mundy was both unhappy that he neglected to write down his observations and dissatisfied with his attempt at memorially reconstructing his early travels.

It was through the "Supplement to Relation I," written by Mundy from 1649 to 1650, that he developed his early account into a more valuable description of the Ottoman capital. Since he dismisses the earlier version of the account as "only some Voyages etts. recalled to memorye" (I.25), he evidently felt the need to expand the relation, probably for private reference as well as "for the satisfaction of those that desire better Information concerning that great City" (I.25)—that is, the friends that made up his audience. Since Mundy could not make use of original notes for the supplement (he took none during his stay there), he had to employ new types of resources to finish his work. The end product was a textual *mélange*, composed of various elements such as references to other authors, slightly paraphrased excerpts from printed books, and additional observations retrieved from memory. The supplement follows a diffuse sequence as well: a brief introduction is followed by an excerpt, references to four travel books, two more excerpts, a hand-rubricated map, and ten random memories from Constantinople (scrawled on the back of the map).

At the end of the "Supplement to Relation I," Mundy turns from "the relation of others" to his "owne observation," namely the ten fragmentary memories mentioned earlier. This round of memorial reconstruction proved to be more fruitful than Mundy's first attempt at composing Relation I. After writing, "[o]nly I can remember, viz.," he enumerates a ten-item list comprised of memories from his stay in the Ottoman capital. These memories afford interesting glimpses at Mundy's experience, containing some of the relation's more valuable pieces of content. He recounts the marvel of the city's triple wall,

Sultan Ahmed's procession at the Hippodrome, the city's various inscribed columns, and a visit to Santa [Hagia] Sophia. He remembers matters of military importance, such as the strategic defenses of "the Haven" and the artillery pieces held at Töp-khānah. We even get a sense of Mundy's emotional responses to his observations, like his curiosity over the "terrible lyon . . . playing with a little dog" (I.37) in the ruins of Constantine's "old palace," or his fear of the earthquake, fire, and pestilence afflicting Constantinople during his stay.¹⁷ While the items in the list are loosely connected, if at all, by a sense of narrative linearity, they chronicle an honest attempt at recording the memories and impressions of events long past, so as to provide a dynamic, albeit fragmentary, description of a foreign place. Providing scholars with a dissected view of a travel text in production, the case of Mundy's unpolished manuscript suggests that the content of early modern travel literature may have stemmed just as much from a writer's memory as it did from firsthand observation.

"THE MOST PROBABLEST RELATION OFF OTHERS": MUNDY'S MANUSCRIPT AS REFERENCE GUIDE

Although a sharper memory helped enlarge Relation I to a degree, it was Mundy's deference to secondary sources that increased its value the most. He begins the supplement with references to and excerpts from six different contemporary books on Turkish life and customs. It was rare (in print at least) for English travel writers to quote each other at length (unless the citation is unacknowledged—a common occurrence), and even rarer for one simply to direct the reader to another's text, perhaps because the practice undermined the spirit of competition in the travel book market. Since the book was probably read in coterie circulation rather than sold in a competitive context, it did not matter whom the author quoted or paraphrased; for Mundy and his manuscript, the purpose of conveying information entirely trumped that of marketability.¹⁸

At the beginning of the section Mundy promises to provide more content "for the satisfaction of those that desire better Information concerning that great City." He relies on the "probablest Relation off others" to provide this content by simply directing the reader to Michel Baudier's *History of the Imperiall Estate of the Grand Seigneurs* (1635). Over the next page and a half he proceeds to paraphrase "in brief" an excerpt from Baudier on the basic geography and ethnic contours of Constantinople. At the end of the passage Mundy informs his readers that "the description of the City [in Baudier's book] is

from p. 1 to p. 18” and that one can find material “concerning the serraglio, weomen, treasure, officers, etts . . . from p. 18 to p. 191, the end” (I.26). In this case, he has not only excerpted and paraphrased printed books to enhance his manuscript’s utility, but also supplied his audience with suggested reading, replete with specific page numbers corresponding to certain points of information.

In the next section, Mundy describes four more sources, imparting concise notes about the importance of each to the study of Turkish culture. George Sandys’s *A Relation of a Journey* (1615) and Henry Blount’s *A Voyage into the Levant* (1636), the first sources Mundy mentions, were regarded in seventeenth-century England as two of the best travel accounts concerning Ottoman dominions:

Allsoe in Mr. Sands there is some relation of the above mentiond, there beeing the draught or print of the Citty, allso of the serraglio apart, with others. Allsoe in Mr. Blunt of the turkish moderne Condition, unto whome I referr you for a more elegant description of the above written. (I.26)

Mundy describes Sandys and Blount as good sources for the “above mentiond” or “above written,” probably referring to Baudier’s description of the city. Here he demonstrates his awareness of travel writing’s tendency toward overlap and repetition, especially regarding such a popular destination as Constantinople. He aims to guide his readers through this wealth of travel knowledge, marking which aspects of each source are worthy of consideration. So while Sandys’s book featured detailed engravings and maps of the Ottoman capital, Blount was the source for an up-to-date (not to mention elegantly written) description of Turkish culture.¹⁹ Mundy’s description of two more sources functions in a similar manner:

As concerning their Religion, it is handled somewhat largely by Mr. Purchase in his pilgrimage. For the severall habitts used att Constantinople, where most officers and Nationes are distinguished by their habits, I have a little booke, only of that particular, painted by the Turcks themselves in Anno 1618, although no great art therein, yet enough to satisfie concerning that Matter. (I.27)

Here we learn Mundy considered Purchas the best source for information on Islam, despite his biases, while an unknown Turkish book was the preeminent guide to clothing. He concludes his section of excerpts and references with long paraphrased passages from Sandys’s *Relation* and Thomas Gainsford’s *The Glory of England*

(1618), taking from the former a history of the city and descriptions of its most famous sights and from the latter a description of the seraglio.

Through his use of secondary sources, Mundy created, in effect, a short reference guide to the Ottoman Empire. The list of four sources provides the reader with authors' names and the merits of their works, much like a modern annotated bibliography. Further, an annotated list of this kind could reflect the actual reading practices of early modern English travelers and scholars studying the Ottoman Empire: there were many accounts of Islam, but Purchas produced the best description of the religion; one had to go to Constantinople to find the foremost book on Turkish clothing; Sandys was a good source for illustrations; and Grimeston's translation of Baudier was a valuable source of general information on the city.²⁰ Of course Mundy's annotated guide, like his audience, was local in nature, referring to books that likely formed a modest private library at his home in Penryn, Cornwall. Perhaps he omitted Knolles's *History of the Turks* or Busbecq's *Letters* (two of the period's most famous descriptions of the Ottoman Empire) because he simply did not own the books. Since his annotated list is selective in nature, it is not necessarily true that early modern readers regarded Blount, Grimeston, Gainsford, and Sandys as the best sources for general information on the Turks. Yet considering the probable influence that Mundy exerted on his friends in Cornwall, one can conclude that Mundy's reference guide was a sufficient and useful book for its coterie audience, who could follow the references in the manuscript to books in Mundy's library to learn more about the famous city and its inhabitants. If it is doubtful or unclear whether Mundy's list reflected a broader sense of "English" knowledge on the Ottoman Empire, one can at least be certain that the list (and indeed the manuscript itself) shaped the way a small group of people in Cornwall perceived their world. Considering how challenging it is to reconstruct the history of reading, reaching a conclusion on such a localized level is an accomplishment in itself.

THE TRAVEL MANUSCRIPT AS "MEMORIAL"

In his preface, Mundy states that one of his motivations for writing the manuscript was "to keepe [his] owne remembraunce oon occasion off Discourse concerning perticularities off thes voyages" (I.3). As an *aide-mémoire* to help Mundy recall nearly sixty years of world travel, the 1,000-page manuscript preserved in writing information that

might be relayed via oral “Discourse” at a future date. Even though here it is for the benefit of “Discourse” with others that he wrote down his observations, and at another point in the preface he mentions an intended audience of friends, it is probable that the manuscript was first and foremost a private book of personal reference for its author, a tool for collecting and organizing the sundry experiences and travels of Mundy’s life. What’s more, since the account of Constantinople derived entirely from personal recollection, his relationship to the amalgamated content of “Relation I” was necessarily a relationship with his own memory. As I have demonstrated in my account of the manuscript’s textual history, he relied on memory to record his experiences more frequently in some places than in others. Through acts of recollection Mundy produced glimmers and patches of content reflecting his distant experience of Constantinople, fleeting pieces of the past that he had to scribble onto the back of a map rather than carefully compose in the body of the book. By way of conclusion, I propose to read Mundy’s revision of Relation I in 1649–50 as an authorial exploration of and interaction with his own memories of Constantinople. Although Mundy began this revision and expansion to flesh out the information collected in his manuscript, I argue that his personal relationship to the Ottoman Empire shifted during this time, bringing the faint memories of his earliest travels to the forefront of his mind and inspiring him to map the foreign identity of Constantinople onto the familiar identity of the English town he called home.

After seven years of traveling in northern Europe, Mundy returned to England in 1647 and would remain there until 1654. During this seven-year span he traveled only in southern England, not leaving the island until 1655, when he embarked on another voyage to India. Despite not traveling abroad at this point in his life, he continued to write in his manuscript book, adding much information about England and completing a series of revisions (including the “Supplement to Relation I”). According to some clues in this section of the manuscript, it is probable that during his seven years in England Mundy was unemployed, litigiously beleaguered, and often bored. We know that he was busy with “sundry crosses, losses, hinderances and discontentts...by bankrupts, repairing of ruined [sic] houses, redeeming land sold, paying old debttts (none of [his] owne)” (V.25) —problems that no doubt precipitated his 1655 voyage to India. It appears that Mundy spent some of his spare time tweaking and augmenting his manuscript book, while at the same time recording a variety of new observations. Perhaps he was driven

by a maxim he placed at the end of one of these sections: "Better doe somthing to no purpose then bee idle" (V.15).

As I have mentioned, Mundy supplemented his writings on the Ottoman capital from 1649 to 1650 mainly because he was unsatisfied with the existing account's sparse content. To expand the section he read widely about the Ottoman Empire and focused his mind on the experience, eventually extracting a few fleeting recollections from his memory. During this time Mundy lived at his home in Penryn, Cornwall, and while attempting to remember Constantinople he also wrote a description of his hometown and county. He even used his book for mental games, drafting self-directed hypothetical questions. In one case he wrote a "presumptuous comparison" between Penryn and Constantinople "for exercize," the idea obviously inspired by his recent interest in Cornwall and the Ottoman Empire. His mind filled with the topographical features and landmarks of the great Asian metropolis from his reading of Grimeston and Sandys, Mundy drew several parallels between the two places, linking the seraglio with "a fine bouling greene," Constantinople's "antient monuments" with "the ruines of the famous antient Collidge of Glasney," and hilltop mosques with the Penryn "markethouse." In a final observation he links town and city symbolically by noting that "the armes [of Penryn are] a Sarazins head" (V.13).

Although this comparison was the product of a bored man with an overactive imagination (and pen), one cannot dismiss its importance in shaping Mundy's perspective on the Ottoman Empire. His imaginative relationship with Constantinople shifted several times, from a city buried in memory and retrieved through fleeting impressions, to the richly detailed metropolis of the secondary literature, and finally to a place curiously familiarized by its connections to his Cornwall home. Constantinople had been an "other" to Mundy because it was culturally alien *and* temporally remote. By mapping its urban topography onto that of his own home, Mundy may have begun to *know* the Ottoman capital, a mental process through which the foreign became familiar, and the seemingly lost experience of Constantinople was refashioned anew in writing.

According to the available evidence, then, it appears that Mundy did not care to publish his travels for England's print marketplace. The book itself held considerable value to its author as a personal effect, an object that had accrued the memories and observations of a life spent traveling the world. As a largely private document, the book was a reasonable place to deposit eccentric mental exercises and observations, like an analysis of London's bells or the "presumptuous comparison"

of Penryn and Constantinople. Simply put, such eclectic content was not always fit for print. Moreover, the manuscript survives as a witness of its author's shifting relationship with the past and the numerous places he visited over the course of his life. The manuscript book, like the memories it preserves, belonged to an individual and reflects the perspectives of that individual as they evolved over time. By preserving the multiple temporal and textual layers of a travel writer's cross-cultural experience, Mundy's book demonstrates how early modern English perspectives on foreign alterity resisted singular models of interpretation, reflecting instead a complex interlacing of impressions gathered, refashioned, and imagined anew over time.

NOTES

1. Michael Brennan, "The Literature of Travel," 246, in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Volume IV: 1557–1695*, eds. John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 246–73.
2. Michael Brennan, *The Travel Journal of Robert Bargrave, Levant Merchant, 1647–1656* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1999); Gerald MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580–1720* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Anna Suranyi, *The Genius of the English Nation: Travel Writing and National Identity in Early Modern England* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008). Recently several scholars have produced work on early modern travel manuscripts beyond the field of Anglo-Ottoman relations. Joyce Lorimer's parallel-text edition of Walter Raleigh's *Discoverie of Guiana* (London: Hakluyt Society, 2006) places the printed version of the account against a manuscript version preserved at Lambeth Palace Library, thoroughly collating variants between the two witnesses. Michael Brennan's *Origins of the Grand Tour* (London: Hakluyt Society, 2004) presents texts of three different travel manuscripts, each recording the travels of young English nobles on the European continent. Historians specializing in early modern exploration and travel have been editing pertinent journals, diaries, account books, geographic tracts, and other handwritten documents since the mid-nineteenth century, most notably through the publications of the Hakluyt Society.
3. Brennan, "Literature of Travel," 247.
4. An account of George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland's first voyage (1586–1587, written by the merchant John Sarracoll) offers a good example of such textual complexity. A manuscript copy (BL Lansdowne MS 100, ff. 22r–51v) of Sarracoll's lost "boke" was transcribed for William Cecil, Lord Burghley in 1587. It is probable

Richard Hakluyt had access to this particular manuscript or a (now lost) copy of it as he prepared the first edition of his *Principal Navigations* (1589), since a heavily edited (and censored) version of Sarracoll's account appears near the end of the volume. It is also possible that official censors or even Clifford himself removed the offending passages before Hakluyt received his copy text. The account was reprinted nearly verbatim in the second edition of *Principal Navigations* (1598–1600). It was revised and repackaged again in 1617, when a historian working for Clifford's daughter, the famous diarist Anne Clifford, compiled a manuscript book of her father's sea voyages that included yet another version of Sarracoll's account. Finally, a series of texts based on this family manuscript compilation would appear in Samuel Purchas's *Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas his Pilgrimes* (1625). In sum, from 1586 to 1625 this particular prose travel account appeared in at least seven different forms, most of which were intended for different audiences.

5. The city was renamed Istanbul after the Ottoman conquest in 1453, even though Christian writers continued to call it Constantinople.
6. Bodleian, Rawlinson MS Add. 315. Sir Richard Carnac Temple and L. M. Anstey, eds., *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608–1667*, 6 vols. (London: Hakluyt Society, 1907–36). All subsequent citations of the text refer to this edition, and will be indicated parenthetically with volume and page numbers.
7. Mundy's manuscript contains pasted-in printed plates, one an engraving of an elderly Dutch woman (untraced source), the other an image of the Great Tun of Heidelberg from Thomas Coryat's *Crudities* (London, 1611). Mundy also inserted seven maps (the world, Europe, Turkey and Arabia, Italy, Savoy, Gaul, and Asia) into his manuscript, all engraved by Henricus Hondius. Hand-rubricated lines corresponding to the traveler's routes figure prominently on the maps. For the practice of early modern travelers "collecting" printed plates in travel manuscripts, see Brennan, *Origins of the Grand Tour*, 47.
8. These later writings have nothing to do with travel, but demonstrate Mundy's tireless curiosity, a quality that contributed much to his value as a travel writer. They include sections on "the paradox of the earth's motion," "the spots in the moon and in the eye of a fly," and "the ringing of bells in changes."
9. For information on Mundy's manuscript, see Temple's description of it in *The Travels of Peter Mundy*, I.lvii–lxiii.
10. Although it is likely that Mundy had planned to recover his manuscript after returning from Asia in 1638, it appears that he gave the book up for lost at that time.
11. In fact, Pindar's copy of Mundy's early relations survives today as British Library Harleian MS 2286. Mundy's original manuscript remains lost.

12. Although authorial claims to a text's "truth" were standard tropes of early modern travel literature, the painstaking (and usually accurate) details of Mundy's account suggest that this statement was somewhat sincere. As I discuss later in this essay, Mundy carefully recorded his sources when citing these "probablest" accounts.
13. The Cornish historian Thomas Tonkin (1678–1742) studied Mundy's manuscript while preparing his *Collections for the History of Cornwall* (never published during his lifetime; first printed in 1838). Tonkin notes that Mundy had "intended [the book] for the Press had not Death prevented him." Temple convincingly casts doubt on Tonkin's observation, citing Mundy's own description of the manuscript in the preface as evidence. Although Tonkin had a close relationship to the Worth family of Cornwall (then in possession of Mundy's manuscript), Temple does not necessarily believe that the historian gained insider knowledge about Mundy's intentions through this connection. See Temple, *The Travels of Peter Mundy*, I.lxii–lxiii. Furthermore, if Mundy intended his manuscript for publication, why did he not send it to the press during the period 1647 to 1654, when he was in England with "idle" time to spend? At around this point Mundy notes that his "intention [was], if God spare [him] life and leisure, to copy outt this booke over againe, as well to rectifie whatt is amisse, according to [his] abilitie, as allsoe to insert many things omitted" (V.19). Here he does not explicitly indicate that his recopying and revising would result in a fair copy for publication.
14. D. G. H., Review of *The Travels of Peter Mundy* in "Short Notices," *English Historical Review* 25.98 (April 1910): 407.
15. "Biram" [Byram] is the Turkish word for Eid al-Fitr, a major Islamic holiday that marks the end of Ramadan.
16. The short first version of the account contains information on the Ottoman political upheavals of the time (in one sentence), Mundy's satisfaction with his stay in the city (in a few sentences), and his relationships with figures such as Paul Pindar and John Eyre (in two sentences). He also mentions that a better account can be found in "Mr. Sands travells." I address Mundy's use of secondary sources in more depth later.
17. Mundy visits the ruins of Emperor Constantine's former palace, built from 324 to 327 CE. He does not refer to Eski Saray (also called the "Old Palace"), built in 1453 and home of the Ottoman sovereign until the construction of the Topkapi Palace in 1478. See Gülru Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991), 3–4.
18. By extracting passages from English travel books and inscribing them in his manuscript, Mundy took part in the widespread practice of copying portions of printed books into manuscript miscellanies (less accurately known as "common-placing," which specifically

refers to the arrangement of excerpted material under topics or heading—*loci communes*). Two examples of this practice can be found in Huntington Library HM 31307 (excerpts from John Ogilby's *Africa*, 1670) and in Yale Beinecke Osborne Shelves b51 (excerpts from Fynes Moryson's *Itinerary*, 1617).

19. These are accurate assessments of Sandys's *A Relation of a Journey* (1615) and Blount's *A Voyage into the Levant* (1635). Sandys's Book One contains eight engravings related to Turkey, including maps, urban "views," and other illustrations. The second half of Blount's work contains a detailed account of Turkish military, religious, judicial, and moral customs. Mundy borrows the phrase "turkish moderne Condition" from the title of Blount's book.
20. It is likely that at least a few of the books Mundy consulted were widely read (or at least widely purchased) in seventeenth-century England. *Purchas his Pilgrimage* went through four editions from 1613 to 1626—a remarkable feat for an 800-page book in folio. George Sandys's *Relation of a Journey* enjoyed similar success, seeing nine editions in the seventeenth century. Edward Grimeston translated several pertinent histories of foreign lands, including Michel Baudier's *History of the Imperiall Estate* (1635), Pierre d'Avity's *The Estates, Empires, and Principalities of the World* (1615), and Jean de Serres's *A Generall Historie of France* (1624). D'Avity's work was particularly popular in Western Europe, appearing in several languages over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A manuscript catalogue of the old Sidney family library at Penshurst Place, written around 1656, records several different copies and editions of D'Avity, most of which were used by Robert Sidney, 2nd Earl of Leicester. I am indebted to Professor Joseph L. Black for sharing the unpublished library catalogue with me.

CHAPTER 7



GUY OF WARWICK, GODFREY OF BOUILLON, AND ELIZABETHAN REPERTORY

Annaliese F. Connolly

Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (Part One, c. 1587; Part Two, c. 1587–88) had a pervasive influence on the early modern stage and in particular on those plays grouped under the flexible generic label “Turk plays.” This influence has been discussed at length, and discussion frequently focuses upon core texts, including early examples, such as Thomas Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda* (1592), Robert Greene's *Selimus* (1594) and *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (1599), George Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar* (1594), and later examples such as William Shakespeare's *Othello* (c.1602–3), Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turk* (1612), and Philip Massinger's *The Renegado* (1623).¹ In this essay, however, I discuss the anonymous play *The Tragical History, Admirable Atchievements and various events of Guy earl of Warwick* and Thomas Heywood's *The Four Prentices of London*. These two plays can also be situated within the parameters of “Turk plays” but have received much less critical attention in this context. Part of the reason for this neglect is that the dates and performance histories for both plays are sketchy or nonexistent. The dates of publication for both plays are not contemporaneous with the dates for their initial performances in the theater: while *The Tragical History* was published in 1661 and *The Four Prentices* in 1615, critics have suggested that both plays are Elizabethan and were written for performance

during the 1590s. *The Tragical History* is dated c.1592–3 and *The Four Prentices* c.1599–1600.² Support for such dating of the plays stems in part from the Marlovian influences apparent in both, not only regarding verse style and stage spectacle, but also in the ways both plays draw on the theater's interest in and depiction of Islamic powers, either Turkish or Persian.

To capitalize on the success of Marlowe's play and others like it, playwrights such as Heywood and the author of *The Tragical History* turned to medieval history and romance narratives for heroes whose stories they could dramatize. The careers of both Guy of Warwick and Godfrey of Bouillon involve a crusade or pilgrimage to the Holy Land and violent encounters with Islamic forces in Jerusalem. This process of creative appropriation resulted in plays with a distinctly orthodox worldview. As Peter Berek has argued, while early imitators replicated Marlowe's verse style and stage action, they were less interested in engaging with the challenges presented to Elizabethan orthodoxy on matters of kingship and providence by Marlowe's hero:

All the early imitations of Tamburlaine suggest that Marlowe's audience and therefore his imitators, wanted to be entertained by his splendid rhetoric and glamorous stage effects without having to yield to the discomfort of unconventional ideas.³

In both *The Tragical History* and *The Four Prentices*, the dramatists utilize the threat posed by the Turk to reinforce a traditional Christian worldview. In each case, however, this medieval perspective serves to underline the fictionalized history of these play worlds, in stark contrast with the complex realities of post-Reformation England at the end of the sixteenth century. Following her excommunication in 1570 by Pope Pius VI and the increasingly aggressive attitude of Catholic Spain toward Elizabeth, the queen and her ministers actively sought to strengthen diplomatic links between England and the Ottoman Empire during the 1580s and 1590s, since an alliance with Constantinople (Istanbul) would serve as an effective counterbalance to Spanish domination in the Mediterranean and in Europe more generally. The correspondence between Elizabeth and Murad III, for example, contained plans for English, French, and Ottoman troops to fight alongside one another against the Spanish, while English Catholics critical of Anglo-Ottoman relations castigated the queen and her supporters as "new turkes."⁴ Economic considerations also meant that English attitudes toward the East, and the Turks in particular, were flexible and pragmatic, as trade links with the Eastern

Mediterranean and beyond were too valuable to allow religious and cultural differences to hold absolute sway.⁵ While many “Turk” plays signal their awareness of contemporary political events and conditions in the Mediterranean during the late sixteenth century, exploring the implications of those events, the two plays discussed in this essay deploy their crusade narratives to examine events closer to home. The common trope of using a foreign setting in order to explore the familiar is one that characterizes both *The Tragical History* and *The Four Prentices of London*.

The second reason these plays have been left off the list of early modern plays featuring Islamic characters is that plays such as *The Four Prentices of London* have been categorized using the generic label “romance.” It is clear from looking at Henslowe’s *Diary* for the period 1593 to 1603 that romance plays were popular: the *Diary* records entries for performances or payments for at least eight plays that dramatized stories from the romance tradition, including *Huon of Burdeux* (1593), *Uther Pendragon* (1597), *The Life of King Arthur* (1598), *Valentine and Orson* (1598), *Brutus* (1598), *Tristram of Lyons* (1599), *Seven Wise Masters* (1600), and *The Four Sons of Aymon* (1602–3).⁶ Although romance may have been popular with theater audiences, contemporaries such as Philip Sidney and Ben Jonson condemned dramatic romances, partly because they violated the unities of time and place and partly because of their fantastic, implausible plotlines.⁷ Early criticism of Heywood’s *The Four Prentices of London*, for example, has tended to regard the play as the work of a fledgling dramatist and therefore as a play that does not demand serious consideration. Here critics appear to take their cue from the fact that the play was parodied in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1613), where characters familiar from city comedy become caught up in the fantasy provided by a romance narrative. Swinburne, for example, describes Heywood’s play as “this Quixotic romance of the City, with its serio-comic ideal of crusading counter-jumpers.”⁸ More recently the work of scholars such as Helen Cooper and Benedict Robinson has established the romance genre as one ideally suited to the exploration of issues of national identity, since romance narratives repeatedly depict the encounter between East and West and between Christian and Islamic characters.⁹ Dramatists turn to romance in order to appropriate stories of cross-cultural encounters, adapting and rewriting them in order to examine contemporary anxieties about shifting and uncertain identities in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The appropriation of stories about medieval heroes such as Guy of Warwick and Godfrey of Bouillon gives the plays a layered effect, whereby the ostensibly medieval narrative of a clash

between Christian and Muslim, as well as between England and the East, encodes a more urgent engagement with contemporary issues.

In both *The Tragical History* and *The Four Prentices of London*, the success of the respective heroes in Jerusalem is attributed to providence, and they are depicted as the agents of a Christian God. This framework for the plays stands in stark contrast to Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, where the arguments for providence are quickly deflated and success is attributed to the will of the individual. Social hierarchy is also rigorously maintained: conquest is depicted in terms of a just war, and the distribution of kingdoms in *The Four Prentice* is among social equals, rather than aspiring social climbers. Through the clash and subsequent defeat of Muslim forces by Christian heroes such as Guy and Godfrey and his brothers, both plays ostensibly offer a rather orthodox handling of the Turkish or Persian characters, who are either forced to convert to Christianity or are killed. The question of providence taps into a set of related anxieties during the 1590s. The conversion of the Turkish sultan Shamurath to Christianity in *The Tragical History*, for example, engages in questions not simply about the one true faith and the conflict between Christianity and Islam, or even the post-Reformation conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism, but in the more specific split within the Protestant Church in England between Puritanism and the established Anglican Church. Guy of Warwick is not simply the champion of Christianity but of Anglicanism as well. *The Four Prentices of London* also adopts a conservative position in its treatment of Islamic characters, since the defeat of the sultan and the Sophy is attributed to providence and legitimates the killing of four "pagan kings." The play offers a fantasy of Christian unity in its crusade against the Turks, and yet during the period 1594–9, when the play was written, the greatest threat to English security came not from Islam or the Turks, but from a source much closer to home: Catholicism and Ireland. *The Four Prentices*, I will argue, like Shakespeare's *Henry V*, which appeared in 1599, depicts a successful foreign campaign legitimated by the discourse of a just war. However, whereas Shakespeare offers a deeply ironic portrait of his Tamburlaine-esque hero and his victory over the French, *The Four Prentices* maintains its patriotic and celebratory view of prentice heroics in the Holy Land.

GUY OF WARWICK AND THE *TRAGICAL HISTORY*

The story of Guy of Warwick, the legendary English hero, was familiar during the early modern period. His feats of bravery were recorded in ballads and chapbooks, and were the subject of a number

of plays.¹⁰ Although the story developed over time, the narrative retained a number of key features and characters. Guy is the son of the steward of the Earl of Warwick, who falls in love with the earl's daughter Felice. When Felice rejects Guy, he embarks on a series of adventures to prove himself as a knight. On his return to England, Felice agrees to marry him. Shortly afterward he embarks on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to atone for his violent and sinful life. During his time in the Holy Land, Guy fights and kills a Saracen giant called Amarant. When Guy returns home, he is called upon by the king to defend England against the Danes. He fights and defeats a Danish giant called Colbrand. He then retires to Warwick to live as a hermit and later dies having been reunited with Felice.¹¹ The romance narrative telescopes the historical period of the tenth and eleventh centuries, depicting figures such as Athelstone, king of England and of Jerusalem, in a Middle Eastern setting peopled by Saracens.

Guy's exploits are recorded in a number of contemporary accounts of his life, including the ballad "A pleasant song of the Valiant Deeds of Chivalry, atchieved by the Noble Knight, Sir Guy of Warwick," which summarizes his encounters with the Saracen, giant, and other pagan enemies in the following stanza:

I slew a Giant Amarant
In battel fiercely hand to hand
And doughty Barknard killed I
The mighty Duke of that same land.¹²

Samuel Rowlands's poem *The Famous History of Guy Earl of Warwick*, entered in the Stationer's Register in 1608, went through a number of editions during the seventeenth century and included a woodcut of Guy fighting the giant Amarant (fig. 7.1). In the foreground of the image lie Guy's pilgrim hat and cloak, which have been replaced by a suit of chain mail, while Amarant is naked to the waist and brandishes a spiked club. In the edition published in 1625 the woodcut is accompanied by the following lines:

A Gyant called Amarant
Guy valiantly destroyes:
Whereby wrong'd Ladyes, captive Knights,
Their libertie enjoys.¹³

Critics of *The Tragical History* have remarked upon the ways in which the play bears traces of Marlovian influence. Guy's story of



The Famous History



*A Gyant called Amarant,
Guy valiantly destroyes :
Whereby wrong'd Ladies, captiue Knights,
Their libertie enioyes.*

50



Figure 7.1 Guy fights the giant Amarant. From Samuel Rowland's *The Famous History of Guy Earl of Warwick* (London: E. Allde, 1625), sig. M1v. STC 21378.7, Houghton Library, Harvard University

a quest that involves travelling to Jerusalem and violent encounters with Muslim forces certainly echoes the issues and motifs that featured prominently in Elizabethan “Turk plays,” such as Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine Parts One and Two* and *The Jew of Malta* (c. 1589), Peele’s *The Battle of Alcazar*, and *The Famous History of Thomas Stukeley* (1596). Roslyn L. Knutson has argued that Elizabethan theater companies used their repertoires to market their most successful plays by staging revivals of older ones, such as *Tamburlaine*, and by commissioning new plays that would complement their existing stock by replicating their most popular features.¹⁴ The dramatized story of Guy of Warwick certainly shares some of the structural and thematic features of *Tamburlaine*: both are episodic, as each protagonist encounters and defeats a series of enemies, and both trace the careers of Guy and Tamburlaine as military “supremos” who are defeated only by death. Cooper, for example, arguing that its verse style suggests the early 1590s, notes that “Marlowe’s mighty line is distinctly audible as an influence. The echoes sometimes emerge in concept or phrasing, sometimes in the use of exotic names or other polysyllables.”¹⁵ These features are noticeable in Guy’s description of his success in the opening scene of the play:

These kingly favours that your grace hath shown,
In honouring me a worthlesse Subject thus,
Hath plum’d my thoughts with Eagle-flighted wings,
And beares my mounting mind as high as Heaven.¹⁶

This speech echoes Tamburlaine’s speech in *Tamburlaine Part One* when he explains to Cosroe what prompted him to seek the crown of Persia:

Nature, that framed us of four elements
Warring within our breasts for regiment,
Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds.¹⁷

The author of *The Tragical History* adapts and reinterprets Marlowe’s Scythian shepherd, presenting in the figure of Guy a more conventional hero: Guy’s thoughts turn to a pilgrimage rather than the overthrow of the king. Guy is a loyal subject whose ambition is carefully tethered to his identity as a Christian knight. Marlowe’s distinctive verse style is used to characterize the sultan Shamurath as the proud and tyrannical Turk and is particularly striking in the speeches between the Ottoman emperor and the

king of Jerusalem:

Know petty king of fair Jerusalem
 I am the mighty Sultan Shamurath
 That rules the tripple city Babylon
 And all the kingdomes of the Eastern world. (sig. C2)

Velma Bourgeois Richmond discusses the ways in which Marlowe's influence also extends to stage spectacle and characterization: "Sultan Shamurath parleys with the King of Jerusalem 'upon the walls'; there are alarums excursions. The eastern setting and vigorous claims are reminiscent of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*."¹⁸ The siege of Jerusalem depicted in *The Tragical History* permits stage action that replicates comparable scenes from *Tamburlaine Part Two*, as the stage directions describe: "*A parleysounded, Enter the King of Jerusalem upon the walls.*" This recalls Marlowe's direction at the opening of Act 5: "*Enter the GOVERNOR OF BABYLON upon the walls with [MAXIMUS and] others*" (5.1.0. sd). The governor refuses to agree to a truce and the town is taken; Tamburlaine then orders that he be "[h]ang[ed] . . . in chains upon the city walls / And let my soldiers shoot the slave to death" (5.1.108–9). The stage directions summarize the battle and subsequent defeat of the Turks: "*Alarum excursions. Enter Sultan and Zorastes flying, Guy and they fight, Zorastes escapeth, Guy taketh Sultan Prisoner. Then enter the King of Jerusalem.*"

In *The Tragical History*, however, the play world conflates Saracens and pagans with sixteenth-century European conceptions of Ottoman sultans and Turks. The figure of Shamurath is a case in point. As suggested earlier, different accounts of Guy's story all describe his pilgrimage to Jerusalem and report that while there he fought and killed a Saracen giant called Amarant. *The Tragical History*, however, replaces the Saracen giant Amarant with a Turkish sultan, Shamurath, and his counsellor Zorastes. The single combat between Amarant and Guy is replaced by a series of scenes in which Guy of Warwick helps to relieve the besieged city and defeat the Turks. Critics such as Cooper and R. S. Crane have each noted that some features of this dramatization of Guy's story are unique to the play, and that these features can be found in the Jerusalem scenes, which bear the strongest signs of Marlovian influence.¹⁹

The decision to swap the giant with a Turkish sultan called Shamurath, I argue, was informed by the commercial pressures of the Elizabethan theater, in response to which companies would commission plays or adapt material to capitalize upon popular

characters and motifs. In the case of the Turkish sultan, Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* had provided the impetus for some of the plays that included Turkish characters, together with historical accounts of the Turks and the Ottoman Empire. The choice of the name Shamurath suggests that the dramatist selected a name that already had a theatrical pedigree. Amurath [Murad] was used for characters in Robert Greene's *Selimus* and Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda*, and it is used as the name for the Turkish sultan in George Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar*. Amurack appears in Greene's *The Comicall Historie of Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, while Ameroth is used in *John of Bordeaux* (1592). As Matthew Dimmock notes, while these names were popular on the stage, they were also used in contemporary writing as alternative names for Sultan Murad III, who ruled the Ottoman Empire from 1574 to 1595 and corresponded with Elizabeth I.²⁰ Richard Hillman has argued that Shakespeare draws on his audience's familiarity with the dynastic maneuvering of the Ottoman sultans, specifically the relationships between Murad I and his son Bayezid and between Murad III and his son Mehmed III in the Henriad's references to the Turk.²¹ Hal's speech in *Henry IV, Part Two* is designed to reassure the nobles that his accession and reign will be smooth and untroubled:

This is the English, not the Turkish court;
Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
But Harry Harry.²²

Hillman points out that, in fact, the effect of this comparison is to suggest parallels between the troubled father-son relationship of Henry IV with Prince Hal and similar father-son relationships within the Ottoman dynasty.

The name Shamurath in *The Tragical History* places the play within a specific theatrical context, and the imitative qualities demonstrated by the character of the sultan also highlight the metatheatrical nature of that role. *The Tragical History* therefore demonstrates some sophistication in its depiction of the Turk as a stage villain: it has its tongue firmly in its cheek. The sense in which the actor performing the part of Shamurath is role-playing a familiar part is also suggested by the irresistible comparison available to modern readers between the name Shamurath and that of Henry Fielding's parodic antiheroine Shamela.²³ Fielding created Shamela to satirize Samuel Richardson's exemplar of female virtue, Pamela, and the parody works partly through Fielding's choice of a name,

which underlines the novel's premise that the character is a fake Pamela and is shamming virtue.²⁴ While the aim of the author of *The Tragical History* was not the same kind of explicit parody used by Fielding, the name Shamurath does indicate an awareness of its self-reflexive quality.

The Tragical History can also be grouped with a handful of Turk plays that deal specifically with the conversion of Islamic characters to Christianity, including Corcut in Greene's *Selimus* (1594), the Moorish king and queen in Middleton's pageant *The Triumphs of Truth* (1613), and Joffer in Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the West II* (1631). The small number of plays that dramatize conversion in this particular direction can be compared with the more extensive number that dramatize English or European characters who "turn Turk" and reflect cultural anxiety about conversion to Islam in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.²⁵ In *The Tragical History*, the conversion of Shamurath to Christianity highlights the play's subscription to medieval views on Islam and the East. The play begins by suggesting the affinity between Islam and black magic through the depiction of Shamurath's diabolical counselor Zorastes, who conjures spirits in an attempt to defeat Guy.²⁶ Later in the play, when Guy has defeated the sultan, Shamurath is distanced from the dark arts of Zorastes when he acknowledges the might of the Christian God and the transformative power of his agent Guy. Shamurath becomes the model of a noble Turk or Moor as he advocates the conversion to Christianity, not just for himself, but for his whole kingdom:

We yield consent victorious conqueror
 The God you serve is great Omnipotent,
 Ruling the day of battle as he please
 Making one hundred kil ten thousand men
 Such were the odds of our battallions
 Therefore for Guy of Warwicks sake
 Wee'l trust in Christ, and Mahound clean forsake. (sig. C4r)

The sultan attributes Guy's success to a providential God, who together with Guy as his scourge, provide a persuasive argument for conversion. Whereas Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* mocks the idea of a providential God, *The Tragical History* uses Guy to endorse it. Time, the play's presenter, confirms that the conversion has taken place as he sums up the plot:

Time that in his ceaselesse motion
 Controuls the hearts of Kings and Emperours

Hath now converted Sultan Shamurath
 To tread the Christian path of perfect Christendome
 And now with bishops, priests and patriarchs
 They are returned back to Babylon
 To Christen all that heathen nation
 Think this is done. (sig. D1)

While the conversion of Shamurath to Christianity ostensibly reinforces the binary opposition between Christian and Muslim, with Christianity depicted as the one true faith, the play also indicates some of the fault lines that traverse its post-Reformation surface. The play complicates the homogeneous concept of medieval Christianity by engaging with contemporary debates that had divided the Protestant Church under Elizabeth and had been debated during the anti-Puritan Martin Marprelate controversy of the 1580s and 1590s. In the Chorus at the start of Act 2, for example, Time alludes to the conflict over clerical dress known as the Vestiarian Controversy. According to Time, Guy is appropriately occupied and fights in better places than “Deanes and Chapters landes at home”:

He doth not strike at Surplices and Tippetts,
 (to bring an Oleo in of Sects in Sippets). (sig. B1r)

Cooper notes that the author of the play appears to adopt an anti-Puritan position in relation to the wearing of the tippet, the band of silk worn round the neck of clergymen, suggesting that disputes over relatively trivial matters such as these were in danger of splitting the Church of England into factions or sects.²⁷ So, while Guy is ostensibly a warrior pilgrim from a medieval crusade narrative and facilitates an exploration of English national identity through his encounters with Islamic characters in Jerusalem, his role also permits some satirical commentary upon the religious disputes that characterized the history of the Church of England in the 1580s and 1590s.

GODFREY OF BOUILLON AND *THE FOUR* *PRENTICES OF LONDON*

Like *The Tragical History*, *The Four Prentices* uses features from the life of a popular medieval hero to provide a thrilling adventure story that moves from London, across Europe to Jerusalem, and back again. *The Four Prentices* dramatizes the historical figure of Godfrey of Bouillon, who was the leader of the First Crusade and the first Latin ruler of Palestine after the capture of Jerusalem in 1099.²⁸ The

play develops this premise to present the story of Godfrey and his three brothers and their decision to enlist as part of a crusade led by Robert, Duke of Normandy. Despite being the sons of the Duke of Bouillon, the brothers were forced to work as apprentices in London when their father was banished from his lands by the king of France. The brothers are separated on their journey to Jerusalem when they become shipwrecked, and the play charts the adventures of Godfrey, Guy, Charles, and Eustace until they are reunited at Jerusalem and fight to defeat the Sophy of Persia and the Souldan of Babylon.

Godfrey of Bouillon, like Guy of Warwick, would have been familiar to an Elizabethan theater audience due to Godfrey's reputation as a Christian knight and his inclusion in the list of the Nine Worthies, a group of champions who exemplified the qualities found in great military leaders. The Nine Worthies were composed of three classical figures: Hector, Alexander the Great, and Julius Caesar; three biblical figures: David, Joshua, and Judas Maccabeus; and three Christian figures: Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey of Bouillon. In some English Renaissance accounts of the Nine Worthies, the figure of Godfrey of Bouillon was replaced by Guy of Warwick.²⁹ Richard Lloyd's *A Brief Discourse of the Nine Worthies* (1584), for example, includes Guy rather than Godfrey:

I am Guy the Barron bold, of the deed the doughtiest knight
That in my daies of England was, with shield or spear in fight.
An English man I am by birth, in faith a Christian true:
The wicked lawes of Infidels I utterlie eschue.³⁰

Heywood's *The Four Prentices of London, with the Conquest of Jerusalem* can also contribute to the discussion of *The Tragical History* as a product of the commercial forces of the Elizabethan theater. In his dedication to the first published quarto in 1615, Heywood indicates that his play belonged to a previously popular genre, and he offers a tantalizing suggestion about the date for the play when he remarks that it was written at the start of his career: "That as Playes were then some fiftene or sixteene yeares agoe it was in the fashion."³¹ If we are to take Heywood at his word, these comments would suggest a performance date for the play around 1599 or 1600. Critics have been divided over the dating of the play, mainly because Henslowe's *Diary* refers to several other plays, namely "Jerusalem," which was performed in 1592 at the Rose by Lord Strange's Men, and "godfrey of bullen" in 1594–5, which was featured in the repertory of the Admiral's Men.³² Editors of *The Four Prentices of London*,

such as Mary Ann Weber Gasior, have argued that the play described by Henslowe as “2 pte of godfrey of bullen” is in fact an early version of Heywood’s play later published as *The Four Prentices of London*.³³ Gasior argues that Henslowe marks the play “ne” since it is a revision of the earlier play “Jerusalem.” Other evidence supporting 1594 as the date for Heywood’s play is an entry in the Stationer’s Register on June 19, 1594, of “an enterlude entituled Godfrey of Bulloigne with the conquest of Jerusalem,” and although this play-text printed by John Danter has not survived, it has been suggested that it is perhaps an early version of Heywood’s play.³⁴ The 1594 date also coincides with the publication of Richard Carew’s translation that same year of the first five cantos of Tasso’s *Gerusalemme liberata*, entitled *Godfrey of Bulloigne, or, the recoverie of Hierusalem*.³⁵ Tasso’s poem first appeared in England in 1581 and had influenced English poets including Spenser, who published the first three books of his epic *The Faerie Queene* in 1590 followed by Books IV–VI in 1596.³⁶ The popularity of Godfrey’s story may well have inspired Heywood to compose a play on this subject at this time. Carew’s work was superseded by the complete translation of *Gerusalemme liberata* by Edward Fairfax in 1600, with extracts included in *England’s Parnassus* published in the same year, which would coincide with Heywood’s own dating of his play.³⁷ The arguments advanced by Gaisor and earlier theater historians such as W. W. Greg—namely that Heywood revised the play “Jerusalem” and that the entries for “godfrey of bullen” refer to *The Four Prentices* by a different title—have been challenged by Knutson’s recent work. Knutson argues that the critical tradition of treating plays with titles suggesting the same or similar subject matter as different titles for the same play or revisions of a single play has the effect of glossing over the commercial practice of commissioning plays on similar or the same topics.³⁸ Knutson also suggests that the development of the two-part play, comparable to the modern-day film sequel, was another commercial strategy used by dramatists and that “godfrey of bullen,” like “Hercules” and “Tamar Cham,” was probably another instance of this principle at work.³⁹

The Four Prentices of London, like *The Tragical History*, also indicates its debt to Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* in its verse, characterization, and stage action. Mark Thornton Burnett has argued that Heywood in *The Four Prentices of London* capitalizes upon Marlowe’s success with *Tamburlaine* by imitating the style and some of the play’s other features such as an exotic locale and Turkish and Persian characters.⁴⁰ The massing of Christian and Muslim forces before the walls of Jerusalem provides an opportunity for vaunting between the Souldan

and Robert, Duke of Normandy, and each seeks to convey the scale of his army using the evocative lists of locations favoured by Marlowe in *Tamburlaine*. The Souldan begins:

From Ganges to the Bay of Calcut,
 From Turkey and the three-fold Arabie:
 From Sauxin Eastward unto Nubia's bounds,
 From Lybia and the Land of Mauritanis,
 And from the red Sea to the wilderness,
 Have we unpeopled Kingdomes for these warres,
 To be reveng'd on you base Christians.⁴¹

His claims are then countered by Robert, who blends both the familiar and mythical names of England and other European locations:

From England, the best brood of martiall spirits,
 Whose wals the Ocean washeth white as snow,
 For which you strangers call it Albion:
 From France, a Nation both renowned and fear'd,
 From Scotland, Wales, even to the Irish Coast,
 Beyond the pillars great Alcides rear'd,
 At Gades in Spaine unto the Pyrene Hills,
 Have we assembled men of dauntlesse spirits
 To scourge you hence ye damned infidels. (2268–76)

Although the Souldan is depicted as initially more mild-mannered than the Persian Sophy, both use the symbolic image of a red flag to signal their power and to terrify their enemies. The Souldan hopes that the mere sight of the red flag will repel the advancing Christians:

Why swarme these Christians to our Citty wals?
 Looke (forreiners) do not the lofty Spires,
 And these cloud-kissing Turrets that you see,
 Strike deadly terrour in your wounded soules?
 Go, Persian, flourish my vermillion flag,
 Advance my standard high, the sight whereof
 Will drive these stragglers in disordered rankes,
 And in a hurly burly throng them hence. (1905–12)

These references to a red flag allude to Tamburlaine's warning to the city of Damascus in Marlowe's play when he uses white, red, and black flags to indicate the fate of the town and its inhabitants (Part One, 4.2.116–22).

Burnett, echoing Berek's argument about Marlowe's imitators, states that Heywood neutralizes some of the troublesome issues raised by aligning his apprentices with Tamburlaine.⁴² Heywood's heroes may engage in Marlovian vaunting with their enemies, but they are Protestant heroes who have embarked on a crusade, rather than the campaign of conquest executed by Marlowe's protagonist:

Their Holy Crusade replaces the mass pillaging and quest for power of Marlowe's conqueror. Tamburlaine's challenges to divine authority and overweening pride are placed by Heywood in the mouths of pagans who do not survive at the end of the play.⁴³

The play makes explicit that the crusade has the support of providence, a fact that absolves each of the apprentices of their murder of a Muslim king at the end of the play. The stage directions indicate the brutal stage action once the city of Jerusalem has fallen to the Christian forces: "*Alarum. The foure brethren each of them kill a Pagan King, take off their crownes, and exeunt: two one way and two another*" (2379 sd). The killings and the campaign are divinely sanctioned according to Robert, Duke of Normandy:

Now smooth againe the wrinkles of your browes
And wash the bloud from off your hands in milke:
With penitentiall praises laud our God,
Ascribe all glory to the heavenly Powers,
Since Syon and Hierusalem are ours. (2380–4)

This point is reinforced by the distinction Tancred makes between the Christian soldiers and their Islamic enemies:

We do abhorre a heart pufft up with pride,
That attributes these conquests to our strength;
'Twas God that strengthened us and weakened them,
Since Syon and Hierusalem. (2385–8)

A useful counterpoint to Heywood's and Marlowe's plays is Shakespeare's *Henry V* since it provides an ironic assessment of its hero and his military achievements.⁴⁴ Heywood's play presents a model of Christian unity in its crusade against the Turks, as the company consists not only of the sons of the Duke of Bouillon, but also the Italian prince, Tancred, and French noblemen who all assist the brothers on their journey to Jerusalem. By contrast, *Henry V* turns a sardonic eye upon Henry's campaign against the French, which temporarily unites

English, Scots, Welsh, and Irish. Moreover, *Henry V* is Shakespeare's only play to make explicit reference to a contemporary event in the Chorus at the beginning of Act V. The speech alludes to Robert Devereux, the second earl of Essex's campaign in Ireland, and his anticipated return is compared to the return of Henry V from Agincourt. The reference to Essex and the war in Ireland means that the play can be dated with a degree of accuracy; it is thought that the play was acted between March and September 1599, coinciding with Essex's departure and return, and the likely date of composition is early 1599.⁴⁵ In the Chorus the similitude between the anticipated return of a victorious Essex from Ireland and Henry's own return to England after Agincourt is both noted and qualified:

The Mayor and all his brethren, in best sort,
Like to the senators of th'antique Rome
With the plebeians swarming at their heels,
Go forth and fetch their conquering Caesar in;
As, by a lower but a loving likelihood,
Were now the General of our gracious Empress,
As in good time he may, from Ireland coming,
Bringing rebellion broachèd on his sword.⁴⁶

Essex is compared to both Henry and Caesar, yet the effect of this apparent compliment is ambiguous. Ostensibly it praises both Essex as a returning victorious soldier and Elizabeth as his "gracious Empress." However, the speech seems to me to sound a note of warning as much as one of patriotic anticipation, with the figure of Caesar embodying both military success and rebellion.⁴⁷ The parallels between Caesar and Essex as soldiers whose military success gives way to thoughts of seizing power make the portrait of Essex a troubling one. Shakespeare points to the failed reign of Henry's son in the play's epilogue:

Henry the Sixth, in infant bands crowned king
Of France and England, did this king succeed,
Whose state so many had the managing
That they lost France and made his England bleed. (Epilogue, 9–12)

By contrast, the final scene of Heywood's play offers a fantasy of succession as the crowns of the respective "pagan kings" are distributed among the apprentice brothers. In their treatment of providential monarchs and the arguments for war in *Henry V* and *Tamburlaine*, however, both Shakespeare and Marlowe offer a critique of the ideas

that underpin Heywood's play-world where Islamic characters are used to confirm Western orthodoxies.

The popularity of the "Turk play" as a genre during the 1590s is illustrated by *The Tragical History* and *The Four Prentices of London*, and these examples of the genre contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the collaborative strategies employed for staging the Ottoman Empire by Elizabethan theater companies. While each play provides further evidence for the appropriation of Marlowe's style by his contemporaries, *The Tragical History* also gestures at the adaptation of romance sources to supply another variation on the stage "Turk." The multivalency of this character is demonstrated by the way in which it is used not simply to explore contemporary anxieties about the East in general and Anglo-Ottoman concerns in particular. The figure of the "Turk" also permits the examination of religious and political anxieties much closer to home.

NOTES

1. For a discussion of *Tamburlaine's* influence, see, for example, Richard Levin, "The Contemporary Perception of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*," *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England* 1 (1984): 51–70 and Peter Berek, "Tamburlaine's Weak Sons: Imitation as Interpretation Before 1593," *Renaissance Drama* 13 (1982): 55–82. For a recent discussion of the complexities of representing "the Turk" on the early modern stage, see Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), Daniel J. Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2003), Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579–1624* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), Mark Hutchings, "The 'Turk Phenomenon' and the Repertory of the late Elizabethan Playhouse," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 16 (2007), 10.1–39, and Brinda Charry, "Turk Plays (1540–1660)," *The Literary Encyclopedia*, <http://www.litencyc.com/php/topics.php?rec=true&UID=1738>, accessed August 25, 2007.
2. See Helen Cooper, "Did Shakespeare Play the Clown?," *TLS* 5116 (April 20, 2001), 26–7, John Peachman, "Links Between *Mucedorus* and *The Tragical History*, *Admirable Atchievements* and *Various Events of Guy Earl of Warwick*," *Notes and Queries* 53 (2006): 464–7, and Helen Cooper, "Guy of Warwick, Upstart Crows and Mounting Sparrows," in *Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson: New Directions in Biography*, eds. Takashi Kozuka and J. R. Mulryne (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 119–38. For the date of *The Four Prentices*, see Samuel C. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England*

- during the Renaissance (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), 97–8, and Thomas Heywood's *The Four Prentices of London: A Critical Old Spelling Edition*, ed. Mary Ann Weber Gasior (New York: Garland Publishers, 1980), vii–xv.
3. Berek, "Tamburlaine's Weak Sons," 59.
 4. Matthew Dimmock, *New Turks: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 164.
 5. Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 30–4.
 6. Ronald S. Crane, "The Vogue of *Guy of Warwick* from the Close of the Middle Ages to the Romantic Revival" *PMLA* 30 (1915): 125–94.
 7. See Cooper, "Guy of Warwick," 121.
 8. Algernon Charles Swinburne, *Age of Shakespeare* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1908), 222–3.
 9. Helen Cooper, *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), and Benedict S. Robinson, *Islam and Early Modern Literature: The Politics of Romance from Spenser to Milton* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
 10. See, for example, Velma Bourgeois Richmond, *The Legend of Guy of Warwick* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996).
 11. See Richmond, *The Legend of Guy of Warwick*, and Douglas Gray, "Guy of Warwick (*supp. fl. c. 930*)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11797>, accessed January 6, 2009.
 12. "A pleasant song of the Valiant Deeds of Chivalry, atchieved by the Noble Knight, Sir Guy of Warwick" (London, 1678).
 13. Samuel Rowlands, *The Famous History of Guy Earl of Warwick* (London, 1625), sig. M1.
 14. Roslyn L. Knutson, "Marlowe Reruns: Repertorial Commerce and Marlowe's Plays in Revival," in *Marlowe's Empery: Expanding His Critical Contexts*, eds. Sara Munson Deats, and Robert A. Logan (London: Associated University Presses, 2002), 25–42.
 15. Cooper, "Guy of Warwick," 125.
 16. *The Tragical History, Admirable Atchievements and various events of Guy earl of Warwick* (London, 1661), sig. A2r. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition, and references will be given in the text.
 17. Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great Parts One & Two*, ed. J. S. Cunningham (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 2.7.18–29. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition, and references will be given in the text.
 18. Richmond, *The Legend of Guy of Warwick*, 206.
 19. As Ronald S. Crane, in "The Vogue of Guy of Warwick from the Close of the Middle Ages to the Romantic Revival," *PMLA* 30 (1915): 125–94, esp. 164–5, observes, "The remainder of the play...was

- based upon the common source of nearly all the contemporary versions of the legend, the metrical romance." See also Helen Cooper, "Guy as Early Modern Hero," in *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor*, eds. Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), 185–93.
20. Dimmock, *New Turks*, 169.
 21. Richard Hillman, "'Not Amurath an Amurath Succeeds': Playing Doubles in Shakespeare's *Henriad*," *English Literary Renaissance* 21 (1991): 161–89.
 22. William Shakespeare, *King Henry IV, Part 2*, ed. A. R. Humphreys (Walton-on-Thames: Nelson and Sons, 1966), 5.2.47–9.
 23. Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews and Shamela*, eds. Douglas Brooks-Davies and Martin C. Battestin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).
 24. The *OED* dates the earliest use of the verb "sham" to 1677, citing a quotation from William Wycherley's play *The Plain Dealer*. To date I have not managed to find early modern instances of the word as it is used here.
 25. Burton, *Traffic and Turning*, 109.
 26. See Daniel Vitkus, Introduction, *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England: Selimus, A Christian Turned Turk and The Renegado*, ed. Daniel Vitkus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 9.
 27. Cooper, "Guy of Warwick," 126.
 28. "Godfrey of Bouillon," *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2010), <http://search.eb.com/eb/article-9037164>, accessed April, 12, 2010.
 29. Richmond, *The Legend of Guy of Warwick*, 191–3.
 30. Richard Lloyd, *A Brief discourse of... The Nine Worthies* (London, 1584), sig. Glv.
 31. Thomas Heywood's *The Four Prentices of London: A Critical Old Spelling Edition*, ed. Mary Ann Weber Gasior (New York: Garland Publishing, 1980), 2.
 32. R. A. Foakes (ed.), *Henslowe's Diary*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Garland Publishing, 2002), 17, 22–5, 28, 31.
 33. Gasior, Introduction to *The Four Prentices of London*, xii–xiii.
 34. *Ibid.*, xiii–xv.
 35. S. Mendyk, "Carew, Richard (1555–1620)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4635>, accessed August 20, 2009.
 36. A. C. Hamilton, *The Spenser Encyclopedia* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1990), 678–80.
 37. L. G. Kelly, "Fairfax, Edward (1568?–1632x5?)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9080>, accessed August 20, 2009.

38. Roslyn L. Knutson, *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare's Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 57–9.
39. *Ibid.*, 59–61.
40. See Mark Thornton Burnett, “Marlovian Imitation and Interpretation in Heywood’s *The Four Prentices of London*,” *Cahiers Élisabéthains* 32 (1987): 75–8.
41. Heywood, *The Four Prentices of London*, 100; ll. 2261–7. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition, and references will be given in the text.
42. See note 3.
43. Burnett, “Marlovian Imitation,” 77.
44. See for example, Annabel Patterson, “Back by Popular Demand: The Two Versions of *Henry V*,” *Renaissance Drama* 19 (1988), 29–62, and James Shapiro, “Revisiting Tamburlaine: *Henry V* as Shakespeare’s Belated Armada Play,” *Criticism* 31 (1989): 351–66.
45. Other evidence for 1599 as the year of composition is that it was early in 1599 that the Chamberlain’s Men erected the Globe on Bankside using the wood from The Theatre. The references to the “wooden O,” for example, may have been included to draw attention to the new theater.
46. William Shakespeare, *The Life of King Henry the Fifth*, in *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, 5th ed., ed. David Bevington (New York: Longman, 2004), 5.0.25–32. All further quotations from the play will be taken from this edition, and reference will be given in the text.
47. As James Shapiro similarly argues in *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005), “The Chorus’s comparisons prove disquieting. Caesar had entered Rome harbouring thoughts of returning the Republic to one-man rule” (102).

CHAPTER 8



“NOW WILL I BE A TURKE”: PERFORMING OTTOMAN IDENTITY IN THOMAS GOFFE’S *THE* *COURAGEOUS TURK*

Joel Elliot Slotkin

I In the past several years, scholars have devoted increasing attention to representations of the Middle East and of Persian, Moorish, or Turkish characters in early modern English drama. Many of these studies have examined the cultural, political, and economic encounters between the English and Islamic or quasi-Islamic others and the ways in which early modern English writers constituted their own identity through representations of the other. In particular, critics such as Daniel Vitkus have focused on the permeability of the boundaries between the ideological constructs of East and West and the hybrid identity assumed by Englishmen who ventured into what he calls the “multicultural Mediterranean.” Thus, English identity was constituted not only in antithetical contrast to Middle Eastern cultures, but also by the possibility of assimilation into those cultures—of “turning Turk.”¹

But what happens when playwrights attempt to reverse this perspective, when the world of the play itself—its setting and most of its characters—turns Turk? Several early modern English plays depict Turkish characters and in Turkish settings so that these characters occupy the position of the subject and not the position of the other.

Placing the cardboard villains of Renaissance drama in the position of the protagonists forces the playwright to develop their complexity and make them more sympathetic. If the play is almost entirely populated by Turks, they cannot all be the same, and they cannot all spout moral nonsense; they must have debates, and the debates must have some merit on either or both sides.

Playwrights, I argue, use this shift of perspective to dramatize a sense of radical indeterminacy, not just about English or Turkish national identity but about human identity more broadly. For this purpose, they exploit both the cultural alterity and the stereotypical conventionality of the stage Turk and related figures such as the Moor. In general, these figures tend to share certain stereotypical qualities: they are prone to outbursts of both violent and erotic passion, their passions are changeable and difficult to control, and they are capable of extreme cruelty. In Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, for example, Aaron the Moor embodies the most negative versions of this stereotype. Apart from his devotion to his illegitimate child, Aaron is extravagantly evil. He concludes the play by repenting any good deeds he may have inadvertently performed and wishing that he could have committed 10,000 more evil deeds (5.3.185–90).² While Aaron's adherence to Moorish stereotypes makes him fascinating as a demonic embodiment of evil, it makes him less interesting as a human being. As we would expect, his stereotypical characteristics reduce our sense of him as a three-dimensional personality with a psychological interiority that resembles our own experiences of ourselves and other people.

Later in his career, however, Shakespeare uses Moorish stereotypes to produce the opposite effect. In *Othello*, the psychological depth of the title character becomes apparent through his increasing conformity to the stock character of the Moor. Under the influence of Iago and his own insecurities, he grows jealous, vengeful, and cruel; he comes to be ruled by his passions. Othello begins in a state where he transcends the racist expectations of characters such as Brabantio, but he ends by fulfilling them. Othello's closing speech recognizes this: as he recounts his former slaying of "a malignant and a turbaned Turk" (5.2.353), Othello stabs himself and draws an analogy between the two killings. He thereby identifies himself with Elizabethan archetypes of the villainous Moor or Turk. Yet the process of Othello's degeneration to a stereotype is precisely what produces a sense of his humanity and inner complexity. Iago corrupts Othello only because Othello has subconscious psychological vulnerabilities that stem from his identity as a Moor.

Shakespeare is not unique in this respect. Several other playwrights use these kinds of stereotypes (which should reduce ambiguity and oversimplify the subject) to increase the unpredictability and ambiguity of their characters' actions and the complexity of their plays' commentary. In this essay, I will examine the ways in which Thomas Goffe's *The Courageous Turk* deploys Turkish stereotypes to produce a more ambivalent and nuanced exploration of the relationships between passion and restraint and between Turks and Christians.

The Courageous Turk has received relatively little attention from modern critics, who have tended to assume it lacks interpretive interest. Matthew Dimmock notes that

plays like Thomas Goffe's *The Raging Turke* (1613–1618?) and *The Couragious Turke* (1618), probably based directly on [Richard] Knolles [*The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603)], reflect closely the ideological investments of the latter's chronicle history. Goffe's bombastic dramatization of Ottoman dynastic disputes imitates the structure of *Tamburlaine* and *Selimus*, yet replaces the ambiguities of these earlier plays with a one-dimensional Ottoman stereotype—the “subverter and sworn enemy of the Christians, and of all that call upon Christ.”³

The word “bombastic” appears in virtually every commentary on Goffe's play, and the play's hyperbolic style, derived ultimately from *Tamburlaine*, does not at first glance suggest a nuanced approach to its subject matter. I would like to suggest, however, that the play's dramatization of Ottoman stereotypes actually develops interpretive complexities present in Knolles's *Generall Historie*.

The Courageous Turk was first published posthumously in 1632 as *The couragious Turke, or, Amurath the First*. Its plot does derive from Knolles, but Goffe stitches together the histories of two different rulers and attributes the actions of both to his protagonist Amurath: acts 1–2 come from Knolles's account of Mahomet II (Mehmed II, 1432–81), and acts 3–5 dramatize episodes from the life and death of Amurath I (Murad I, 1319–89).⁴ Goffe also includes significant verbal and situational echoes of Shakespeare's *Othello* (such as Othello's temptation by Iago and Othello's murderous contemplation of the sleeping Desdemona) and *Hamlet* (Amurath receives analogues of the ghost's appearance to Hamlet and the play staged for Claudius).

In Goffe's play, Amurath, king of the Turks, falls in love with a Greek captive, Eumorphe (called Irene in Knolles). His tutor, Lala Schahin, feeling that Amurath is neglecting his kingly responsibilities because

of his love for Eumorphe, stages two masques and fakes a ghostly visitation in order to convince Amurath to “cut this Gordian thred, and rend hence, / That putrid Wenne which cleaves unto thy flesh” (2.4.38–9).⁵ The chastened Amurath publicly beheads Eumorphe and embarks on a program of military conquest. Meanwhile, we are introduced to the Christians and one of their captains, the pious Cobelitz (Miloš Obilić), who tries to overcome the fear and infighting that plague the Christian forces. After winning victories against the Christians, Amurath attacks and defeats his son-in-law Aladin. Amurath threatens to kill Aladin’s children but then relents and makes peace with Aladin. They proceed to “Cassanoe’s Plaines” in “Servia” (5.1.136–8) to defeat the Christian army there (the 1389 Battle of Kosovo). Amurath receives a visitation from his demonic ancestors, who warn him of his impending doom, but he ignores the warning. The Turks defeat the Christians in battle, and Cobelitz is apparently killed. However, when Amurath approaches to view his victory, Cobelitz rises and manages to fatally stab Amurath with a dagger before dying himself. Amurath’s son Baiazet offers to share the monarchy with his brother Jacup, but Schahin and others remind him that “the Turkish Lawes” require Jacup’s death (5.4.143). Jacup upbraids Baiazet and allows himself to be strangled, wrapping his own scarf about his neck and offering the other end to Baiazet.

The most shocking event of the play, Amurath’s sudden decision to behead the woman he loves, evidently captured the imagination of early modern writers and audiences, for it received multiple treatments during the period. Besides being told by Knolles, the episode was presumably recounted in a now lost play by George Peele, *The Turkish Mahomet and Hiren the Fair Greek*, produced around 1594 and famously alluded to in *2 Henry 4* (2.4.154). It was also the subject of a 1611 poem by William Barksted entitled *Hiren: or The faire Greeke*. After Goffe, the subject received other dramatic treatments, including Lodowick Carlell’s *Osmond The Great Turk, Or The Noble Servant*, published in 1657.

By combining the love of Mahomet II with the military conquests of Amurath I (and the murderous dynastic succession following his death), a fusion not found in other sources or analogues, Goffe constructs a protagonist whose potential for social action is defined by the opposing demands of love and war, and both love and war become debased as Amurath navigates his way through their conflicting imperatives. In these respects, the play owes less to self-congratulatory anti-Ottoman propaganda and more to the cynical philosophical disillusionment of Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*.

The conflict between love and war, a trope derived from the romance and epic traditions and common in early modern drama, is significantly inflected by placing it in an Ottoman context. In particular, Goffe plays with the stereotype of the Turks as slaves to their amatory and homicidal passions and thereby expands on an issue already present in Knolles's *Generall Historie*. Knolles describes Mahomet II's dalliance with Irene as the product of "disordered affections, where reason ruleth not the reine," a vice typical of the bombastic stage Turk. Mahomet II appears to rise above this stereotype, presenting his slaying of Irene as a supreme example of Stoic temperance and his ability to "bridle" his affections. However, Knolles comments that the sultan embarks on his subsequent military campaigns "to discharge the rest of his choller," suggesting that excess of passion, rather than the proper restraint of passion, prompted the beheading of Irene.⁶ Goffe's dramatization of Knolles calls into further question the relationship between the twin antitheses of love/war and passion/restraint, as well as which of these four elements is more distinctively Turkish.

Goffe's Amurath seems to be motivated by his stereotypically Turkish passions as both a lover and a fighter. As the play opens, Amurath hyperbolically declares his complete abandonment to the passion of lust: "Jove Ile outbrave thee! melt thy selfe in Lust . . . Ile not envie thee" (1.1.25–7). When Amurath turns to military conquest, he displays equally intense passion. Schahin offers Amurath the severed heads of Christians "to adde freshe oyle unto thy hate, / And make it raise it selfe a greater flame" (3.2.13–14), and Amurath responds with gusto, "O how it glads me thus to pash their braines, / To rend their lockes, to teare these Infidels!" (3.2.23–4). He repeatedly expresses a desire to drink Christian blood (3.2.44, 4.2.89).

Both kinds of passion, however, draw condemnation from other characters—including Turkish ones—which calls into question the idea of a monolithic Turkish viewpoint. Eumorphe worries that Amurath's amorous feelings resemble "streames . . . Which with outrageous swelling flow to fast" (1.1.33–4). Schahin laments that Amurath lies "Drencht in the Lethe of Ignoble lust" (1.2.21). Amurath himself recognizes that his passion for Eumorphe may lead his countrymen to "Call me a Lusty, Lazy, wanton, Coward!" (2.3.56). The Turkish characters present Amurath's indulgence in love as lazy and bestial, a failure to restrain the passions, a disease—a position more congruent with Christian moralism than with stereotypes of the stage Turk, and one that the play might be genuinely advocating to its audience.

Amurath's sadistic violence receives condemnation mostly from Cobelitz and the Christian forces, but Goffe also includes a scene (5.1) where Amurath threatens to kill his own grandchildren in retaliation for his son-in-law Aladin's rebellion, and Amurath's daughter begs him to restrain his fury.

The play's representation of Turkish passions is thus complicated by the discourse of Stoic temperance and restraint, which pervades the play and produces contradictory narratives about the moral significance of Amurath's movement from lover to warrior via the slaying of Eumorphe. Because Goffe's audience presumably opposed the military expansion of the Ottoman Empire into Europe, and because Goffe's play contains significant echoes of Shakespeare's *Othello*, we might expect *The Courageous Turk* to be the tragedy of how Amurath's trusted advisor Schahin wickedly deceives him into a murderous rage, causing him to kill his true love and to embark upon an ultimately self-destructive campaign of military conquest. And, in fact, the play does provide some support for this view of a virtuous Stoic love shattered by intemperate violence. Eumorphe seems to be an honorable woman who tries to bring out the best in Amurath. She identifies beauty as "the worst part of woman" (1.3.8) and argues for a relationship based on "obedience, duty, carefull Love" (1.3.21). In response, Amurath vows to worship "[t]hat virtue in thy brest" (1.3.36). Eumorphe's description presents proper love as a kind of restraint. The play begins with Amurath silencing the "harsh notes" of the martial music to which he has entered because his "softer eares" have turned to love (1.1.1). He thus frames love in terms of refraining from violence, which he characterizes as a kind of servitude. Amurath says that "we / Scorene to be made the servile Ministers" of the Fates "To cut those threads" of people's lives (1.1.9–11).

Amurath's love also transforms his political attitudes, causing him to reject the moral authority of kingship:

Turke, Amurath, slave nay something baser,
King! For all aery titles which the Gods
Have blasted man withall, to make them swell
With puffed up honour, and ambitious wind,
This name of King holds greatest antipathy
With manly government. (2.3.1–6)

Amurath invokes the Stoic virtue of masculine self-government and suggests that it is antithetical to "oriental despotism" and military

conquest. When Amurath begins to waver in this resolve as he contemplates, Othello-like, the sleeping Eumorphe, the intemperance and hubris of his expression of ambition seem to demonstrate the truth of his earlier statement:

Hence, then th'ambition of that furious youth,
 Who knew not what a crime his rashnesse was!
 I might orecome more Kingdomes; have more dominion
 Enthroned my selfe an Emperor! oth' world,
 I might! I might! Amurath thou mightst! (2.3.45–9)

He describes war as furious ambition and then becomes a furious megalomaniac as he succumbs to that ambition. In this view of the play, then, Schahin serves as an Iago figure who unleashes Amurath's violent passions, resulting in the horrifying spectacle of Eumorphe's beheading and Amurath's impious and doomed attempt to conquer the world. Vitkus argues for this interpretation of the play: "The irony is that Amurath, like Othello, has been 'wrought' upon by a male follower who succeeds in turning him against the virtuous woman he loves and in bringing on his death and damnation. In both cases, dramatic irony exposes the murderer's misogynist code as damnable and deadly to himself."⁷

The play, however, also incorporates a powerful contrary narrative, in which Amurath's love represents a lack of self-control and Schahin recalls him to his neglected duties and responsibilities as a ruler. Schahin differs in important ways from evil counselors such as Iago. From his first soliloquy in 1.2, Schahin consistently claims to act for the good of both Amurath and his empire—and this corresponds to his portrayal in Knolles, who praises his "graue aduice and counsaile."⁸ Schahin's political advice in the play is generally sensible; for example, he encourages a productive alliance between Amurath and the Anatolian ruler "The German Ogly" (3.5.19). To Schahin, Amurath's love for Eumorphe is "intemperate Lust" (2.4.4), and therefore she represents a "putrid Wenne" (2.4.39) on Amurath that he intends to cure by instilling in him Stoic self-discipline. Schahin presents himself as a voice of temperance, advocating that Reason, "that best part of man," should "sway and rule each Passion. / Affections are good Servants: but if will / Make them once Master, theyle prove Tyrants still" (1.2.10–13).⁹

Although Schahin's judgment of Eumorphe is misogynist, and his manipulation inspires misogyny in Amurath, Eumorphe herself agrees with the principle that "those are Kings, and Queenes whose brest's secure / Like brazen walles, Lust's entrance not endure!" (2.2.30–1).

Seen from this perspective, Amurath's beheading of Eumorphe is a supreme example of temperate behavior and "manly government" (2.3.6). Amurath explicitly challenges his court to be "temperate" enough to resist the temptation of Eumorphe's beauty (2.5.34), and he justifies the beheading with the quasi-Stoic maxim that "he surely shall / That conquers first himselfe, soone conquer all" (2.5.84–5).

Compared to its sources and analogues, the decapitation scene in *The Courageous Turk* systematically de-emphasizes the stereotypical emotionality of the Turks and highlights the issue of self-control. In Knolles, the Sultan Mahomet presents Irene to his court, who had been displeased with his dalliance, and "they all rapt with an incredible admiration to see so faire a thing, the like whereof they had neuer before beheld, said all with one consent, That he had with greater reason so passed the time with her, than any man had to find fault therewith." Being "altogither ignorant of the Sultans mind," they are struck with "great terror" when Mahomet kills Irene, thereby enacting an extreme form of their advice immediately after forcing them to recant it.¹⁰ In Goffe's version of this scene, the key members of Amurath's court are all in on Schahin's plot to turn Amurath against Eumorphe. As a result, when they view her beauty and declare that they would not be able to resist her charms, their claims are not an instance of how readily Turks may be swayed by amatory passions but rather an instance of Machiavellian political theater.

In Barksted's poem, as in all of the versions, Mahomet does link his decision to kill Hiren to Stoic values and a desire to demonstrate "[t]hat I can rule my owne affection." The Stoic facade of Barksted's Mahomet, however, dissolves into a kaleidoscope of unbridled passions as soon as he kills Hiren. He immediately regrets his actions; slays Mustapha (the honorable soldier who warns him that he has been neglecting his responsibilities), calling him a "diuell"; laments Hiren's death; briefly contemplates suicide; and finally out of bitterness devotes himself to "bloudy warre."¹¹ In Goffe, Amurath maintains his composure; offers a moralistic speech about the foolishness of doting on female beauty; speaks in a friendly way to Schahin, the advisor who convinced him to kill Eumorphe; and seems cheerful about moving on to a campaign of military conquest (2.5.73–82).

As Goffe's play shifts to the military conquests of the historical Amurath I, it demonstrates the savagery with which Amurath wages war, but the play also describes such conquests as admirable examples of fortitude and "noble deeds" (1.5.91). Even the Christian hero Cobelitz shares the ethic of self-denial and militarism. When the Serbian governor Lazarus suggests that there is no point in fighting

the superior Turkish army, Cobelitz replies that “[e]ase and succeſſe keeps baſeneſſe company” (3.3.16), valorizing suicidal combat over rational military calculations. Through cowardice and infighting, Lazarus and most of the other Christian forces fail to live up to Cobelitz’s principles. The Christians appear particularly contemptible in act 3, scene 3, where a drunken argument between soldiers degenerates into a catfight between their “Laundresses,” identified in the stage directions as “Truls” (3.3.45, 46 sd).

In presenting Amurath’s conquests as simultaneously terrifying and enviable, Goffe reflects the ambivalence of English attitudes toward the Ottomans as described by many recent scholars, including Emily Bartels, Richmond Barbour, and Linda McJannet. Bartels notes that “while the demonization of Oriental rulers provided a highly charged impetus for England’s own attempts to dominate the East, their valorization provided a model for admiration and imitation, shaming or schooling the English into supremacy, or providing an excuse for defeat.”¹² McJannet observes that the particular qualities for which early modern European historians “admired the Ottomans” were “unity, martial excellence, and strict justice, qualities which they sometimes felt were lacking in their own societies.”¹³

In addition to reproducing this larger societal ambivalence about the virtues and weaknesses of the Turks, the play raises questions about whether Turkishness inheres in their nature or in their society and laws. Although Amurath demonstrates strong passions for violence, his violent acts are also strongly motivated by social pressure. This pressure is initially embodied in Schahin, who tries to recall him to his former royal identity. Goffe also takes pains, however, to emphasize the power of social pressure throughout the play. Knolles reports that after decapitating Irene, the Sultan Mahomet “meaning to discharge the rest of his choller, caused great preparation to be made for the conquest of PELOPONESVS, and the besieging of BELGRADE.”¹⁴ But in Goffe, when Amurath asks his generals what his first act as a reinvigorated monarch should be, they shout in unison “For Thracia!” (2.5.82), and he follows their lead.

As Amurath embarks on his military campaign, he seems to rouse his fury by conceiving it as an obligation: “Our furie’s patient! now will I be a Turke” (3.2.9). Although Amurath has just expressed a wish to wash his hands in Christian blood, he is apparently not as angry as he thinks he ought to be, and he encourages himself by invoking the stereotype of the stage Turk as an idealized Turkish identity to which he aspires. Similarly, when he is debating whether to stay with

Eumorphe or to go out and conquer, he tries to shame himself by saying that “[t]he Christians now will scoffe at Mahomet; / Perchance they sent this wretch thus to inchant me!” (2.3.50–1). The exigencies of Turkish piety, then, are contrary not only to Christian piety but at least partially to Amurath’s own nature.

The final episode of the play crystallizes these conflicting narratives by presenting an exemplary instance of Turkish cruelty that seems divorced from violent passion. After Amurath’s death, his son Baiazet ascends the throne and offers to share power with his younger brother Jacup. However, Schahin again intervenes and tells Baiazet that to make himself and the realm secure, and to respect “the Turkish Lawes” (5.4.143), he must kill his brother—in fact, that it would be unnatural to refrain from killing his brother. Eurenoses argues that the Turkish nation itself demands the murder of Jacup: “Although we speake, yet thinke them not our words, / But what the Land speakes in us!” (5.4.177–8). Neither their arguments nor Baiazet’s reluctant acquiescence displays the supposedly natural bloodthirstiness of the stereotypical Turk. Goffe’s emphasis on the force of Turkish custom and precedent is a striking departure from Knolles, who identifies this episode as “the beginning of the most vnnaturall and inhumane custome, euer since holden for a most wholesome and good policie amongst the Turkish kings and emperours.”¹⁵ What Knolles calls an effect of the killing, Goffe depicts as its cause.

Goffe’s play thus raises questions about what kinds of savage behavior are natural and what kinds are the results of social forces. Ultimately, it appears that the Turkish predilection for slaughter in this play is due less to volatile passions and more to the strictures of Turkish law and the imperative to emulate the idealized Turkish national type. Goffe thus shows the importance of socially constructed racial identities in determining behavior and maintaining the imperial polity. Turkish law and honor require a self-denial that is conflated with Stoic virtue but that produces atrocious results. Despite its relative lack of psychological depth, the play offers a message that is arguably less racist than Shakespeare’s *Othello*, where a Christian Moor who is fully acculturated to Western society nonetheless proves unable to restrain his natural passions. In contrast, Goffe emphasizes the ways in which social constraints direct supposedly natural behavior.

The play also suggests that this dynamic is not uniquely Turkish. In fact, it repeatedly gestures toward universalizing moral statements in which the Turks are merely stand-ins for humanity more generally. The conclusion of the play’s verse argument presents Baiazet’s fratricide as characteristic of politics, not of Turks: “Thus still springs / The

Tragick sport which Fortune makes with Kings" (23–4). Furthermore, Goffe's Turks are fairly invested in many aspects of Western culture and values: they are Petrarchan lovers and aficionados of neoclassical allusions and masques. Schahin uses Alexander the Great, also an admired figure in the West, as the mouthpiece for his condemnation of Amurath's amorous behavior, and he cites both universal natural examples and Roman precedent in arguing for Jacup's death (5.4.135–40).¹⁶ As noted earlier, Cobelitz shares warrior values with the Turks, and the Turkish forces appear at times to embody them better than Cobelitz's own people. Despite Amurath's savagery, his central position in the play and his love for the desirable Eumorphe facilitate audience identification with him. Conversely, audience sympathies aroused by Cobelitz's admirable piety and destruction of the Ottoman emperor are undercut by his position in the plot as the antagonist and by the manner of his killing of Amurath, which he achieves through treachery and concludes with somewhat unbecoming gloating and mockery.

Thus, the play makes it difficult for the audience to sustain a rigidly defined notion of *us* and *them*. Although Amurath's actions are stereotypically Turkish in their ultimate effects, his process of moral reasoning (and those of the other Turks) disorientingly yokes his Turk-like actions to Western ideologies such as Petrarchanism and Stoicism. Nonetheless, the Turkishness of Amurath and the other characters facilitates the play's commentary on issues that are not merely specific to Ottoman society. The Turks' reputation for strong, uncontrollable passions highlights the challenges of maintaining Stoic self-control and manifesting it in moral action, as when Amurath's effort to temper his amorous passions for Eumorphe leads to his intemperate passion for violence. Moreover, by associating the Stoic ideal with the inhuman strictures of an alien culture, the play dramatizes the difficulty of distinguishing between a lack of self-control (giving in to destructive, weak, or immoral passions) and excessive self-control (denial of sympathetic human passions). The play presents duty, passion, war, kingship, and love as potentially valuable, but ultimately, Amurath's pursuit of these goals leads him to inhuman acts. The flexibility with which moral, especially Stoic, rationales are deployed makes it hard to tell whether there is a correct side in the love/war debate. It suggests that Turks are driven by a complex mixture of passion, self-constraint, and social imperative. It calls into question the moral virtues espoused by both Christians and Turks, since they are used to rationalize things like neglecting one's governmental responsibilities, beheading one's beloved, and drinking the blood of Christians.

In this process, the ambiguity of the term “Turk” serves as a pivot point between otherness and selfhood. As the play seems to use it, “Turk” refers not only to a national identity in the world outside the theater but also to the stock character of English drama. In effect, *The Courageous Turk* treats the inhuman figure of the stage Turk as an actual cultural ideal to which historical Turkish characters aspire. This conflation of real and theatrical identities is supported by several instances of (admittedly clumsy) metatheatricality in the play, when characters compare themselves to actors (e.g., 2.2.15–17 and 5.4.99–102). Jacup highlights both the artificiality and the wickedness of this vision of Turkish identity by attributing his impending death to the decree of “impious Statists”: amoral, Machiavellian politicians (5.4.200). In contrast to Eurenoses, who claims that the land speaks through him (a naturalizing metaphor for Turkish identity), Jacup sees the conception of Turkish national values that demands his execution as a piece of propaganda cooked up for self-serving ends. Like Amurath, Jacup seems partially alienated from the supposedly natural Turkish identity.

The performative nature of Turkish identity has interesting implications for the English audience, who can see characters striving to conform to an ideal that may appear horrible or ridiculous to them. The epilogue concludes with a blatant appeal to the patriotic distinctions between Englishmen and Turks: “All heer wish turkes destrucion our hope stands / That to their ruine you’le all set your hands” (19–20). Nonetheless, to the extent that the universalizing impulses of the play itself repeatedly blur the distinction between the English self and the Ottoman other, *The Courageous Turk* may suggest the arbitrariness and constructed nature of England’s own emerging sense of national identity, as well as the potentially monstrous consequences of enforcing conformity to that identity.

NOTES

1. Daniel J. Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 8–9.
2. William Shakespeare, *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare*, eds. Stephel Orgel and A. R. Braunmuller (New York: Penguin, 2002).
3. Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2005), 201.
4. Susan Gushee O’Malley, ed., *A Critical Old-Spelling Edition of Thomas Goffe’s The Courageous Turk* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1979), 36.

5. 'wen: a lump or protuberance on the body' (Ibid., 2.4.39n).
6. Richard Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes from the first beginning of that nation to the rising of the Othoman familie* (London, 1603), 350, 353.
7. Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 101.
8. Knolles, *Generall Historie*, 189.
9. *Othello* also displays ambivalence about self-restraint. Othello's inability to control his passions contributes to his downfall, but the play's most powerful articulation of the virtue of subordinating passion to reason comes from Iago as part of his effort to corrupt Roderigo at the end of 1.3.
10. Knolles, *Generall Historie*, 353.
11. William Barksted, *Hiren: or The faire Greeke* (London, 1611), 97.2, 109.5, 114.1.
12. Emily C. Bartels, "The Double Vision of the East: Imperialist Self-Construction in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine, Part One*," *Renaissance Drama* 23 (1992), 5.
13. Linda McJannet, *The Sultan Speaks: Dialogue in English Plays and Histories about the Ottoman Turks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 60. The seemingly labile descriptions of the Turks in the early modern period are so common that I suspect they represent, not the taste of an elite group of authors for ambiguity and paradox, but rather a typical early modern stance toward the other. These authors felt much freer than we might expect to praise peoples while in the same breath condemning them as savage. See also Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576-1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 18.
14. Knolles, *Generall Historie*, 353.
15. Ibid., 201.
16. Su Fang Ng, in "Global Renaissance: Alexander the Great and Early Modern Classicism from the British Isles to the Malay Archipelago," *Comparative Literature* 58.4 (2006), observes that "a line of Ottoman sultans used Alexander the Great as an ideal model and expression of their claim to universal empire" and cites Mehmed II as "[a]n avid reader of Homer and the *Life of Alexander*" (297).

CHAPTER 9



THE FRONTIERS OF *TWELFTH NIGHT*

Su Fang Ng

With a villain who is “a kind of Puritan” (2.3.125) and a title referencing the Feast of the Epiphany, *Twelfth Night* has understandably attracted critical attention to its religious allusions and themes.¹ Questions of the religious dimension of the play, however, are moving away from a more generalized Christianity—sometimes contrasted against “pagan,” that is classical, religion—to specific controversies over doctrine. In particular, in the recent religious turn in Renaissance studies, scholarly interest has shifted to Catholic subtexts in Shakespeare’s life and works.² At the same time, however, there are in *Twelfth Night* a number of allusions to the East, including to Islamic empires, allusions whose relation to the Protestant and Catholic readings of the play have not yet been adequately accounted for. Malvolio is not only called a puritan, he is also accused of having “turned heathen, a very renegado” (3.2.59). Given that “renegade” is usually a term for Christian converts to Islam, the religion of *Twelfth Night* is perhaps more layered and complex than is initially supposed. Islam needs to be figured into the abundant allusions to religious devotion and religious deviation in the play.

Discussions of Islam in English Renaissance drama have largely focused on the genre of “Turk” plays, that is to say, plays with Turkish and other Eastern characters that explicitly dramatize Islam and foreground problems of religious conflict.³ Although Islamic themes, subjects, and characters were very popular in English drama during the span of Shakespeare’s career, “Turkish” allusions that are found in

Shakespeare mostly appear to be throwaway references, unconnected to larger patterns. In 2 *Henry IV*, Prince Hal makes a direct reference to the Ottomans when accepting the crown, saying, “This is the English not the Turkish court; / Not an Amurath an Amurath succeeds, / But Harry Harry” (5.2.47–9). But the comparison to Turkish tyranny is not systematically pursued. The closest Shakespeare came to writing a “Turk” play is with *Othello*, whose eponymous protagonist’s murderous rage turns inward until he commits suicide; as he does so, Othello refers to himself in the third person as

a malignant and turbaned Turk [who]
 Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,
 I took by th’ throat the circumcised dog
 And smote him thus. (5.2.362–5)

This scene seemingly makes the metaphor literal as Othello, possibly a Muslim convert to Christianity, reverts to his former identity as the “malignant... Turk” and associates that identity with both treachery and violence, which is directed first against Desdemona and then against his own (Christian?) self. If *Othello* is a play of conversion, the multiple turns and changes that the title character undergoes, not the least because of Iago’s machinations, render his selfhood contradictory and conversion itself deeply ambiguous.

“Turk” plays, including *Othello*, are quite different generically and tonally from *Twelfth Night*. Populated by characters with Italianate or English names, *Twelfth Night* lacks any Muslim or Eastern character. Nonetheless, there is one aspect shared by these two plays, written roughly around the same period—*Twelfth Night* dates from 1600–1 and *Othello* from 1603–4. They are both set in a border zone over which Western Europeans and Ottomans have contested: *Twelfth Night* in Illyria and *Othello* in Cyprus. This contest is explicitly referred to in *Othello* and incorporated into the plot. The Venetian senators send Othello to Cyprus upon reports of “a Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus” (1.3.8). As critics have noted, while most of the play is set in a Venetian-controlled Cyprus, at the time of the play’s performance in the seventeenth century, Cyprus was already under Ottoman rule, having fallen to the Ottomans in 1571. Ironically, Rhodes, mentioned in this scene as having stronger defenses (1.3.25–7), fell to the Ottomans even earlier. In 1522, during the reign of Sulĕyman the Magnificent, the Ottoman Empire wrested Rhodes from the Knights of Saint John (the Knights Hospitaller), who eventually settled in Malta. *Othello*’s setting in Cyprus thus conjures for its audience a

place of Christian losses to the Ottomans and highlights the vulnerability of regions in the eastern Mediterranean to the Ottoman advance.

This essay reexamines the Illyrian setting of *Twelfth Night* to consider how we might similarly read the play's religious and Eastern allusions as part of an indirect engagement with the politics of border zones in the eastern Mediterranean. Places like Cyprus and Illyria, the classical place-name for the eastern Adriatic lands of Dalmatia (now Croatia and Bohemia), were contested spaces as the Ottoman Empire expanded in the early modern period. Their political status changed depending on which power had the upper hand at any moment in time. In the sixteenth century when the Ottomans made a series of conquests—among others, the important trading node of Egypt in 1517—Europeans were put on the defensive. Themes of inversion and turning in *Twelfth Night* speak to more than just holiday festivities; they may also have political resonance. At the same time, these engagements are oblique in *Twelfth Night*, just as *Othello* keeps the Ottomans off stage, or how, as Bernadette Andrea suggests, Mary Wroth's romance *Urania* erases Ottoman imperialism in Cyprus.⁴ The questions of religious devotion that have been asked of *Twelfth Night* need also to be considered in relation to its setting in Illyria. The religious contexts of *Twelfth Night* are multiple and complex, extending beyond doctrinal disputes within Christianity.

That *Twelfth Night* is a play deeply concerned with identity is not new, but the focus has been on issues of gender and class inversions with a central cross-dressing character. When read within the framework of Christmas revelry, the transformations of identity in the play are read as temporary, lasting only as long as the period of carnival. But when we shift the context to Illyria as a border zone between Europe and the Ottoman Empire, transformations of identity in the play are not so neatly contained. Rather, the question of European identity becomes far more fraught. As a comedy, *Twelfth Night* does not present these issues in the same tragic light as *Othello*. However, like *Othello*, *Twelfth Night* also draws together religion and geography to explore the politics of border zones and the consequent dizzying shifts of perspectives.

ILLYRIA AS FRONTIER ZONE

"What country, friends, is this?" asks shipwrecked Viola in the opening act of *Twelfth Night* (1.2.1). The answer, Illyria, has elicited a range of responses. Modern critics view Illyria alternately as an indeterminate space of romance and as an actual geographical place, if

necessary ascribing to it a local habitation and a modern-day name. One set of responses sees it as no more than a vague place-name, just another example of Shakespeare's geographical inaccuracies. Kenneth Muir argues that it is "a geographical compromise, and a conveniently obscure location" because unlike the geographical setting of its sources, known places like Modena and Constantinople, Illyria does not summon up specific associations.⁵ Geoffrey Bullough suggests that Shakespeare made the shift of geographical location from that of his possible source in Barnabe Riche's "Apolonius and Silla" because "on that little-known coast the mixture of Mediterranean romance and northern realism would be more plausible."⁶ Thus, for some scholars Illyria's status as an indeterminate space of romance disconnects the play from contemporary realities, rendering it the stuff of fantasy. Constance Relihan suggests that ancient place names "discourage readers from linking the scene of the play with any geopolitical reality common to early modern English experience."⁷

However, other scholars, while still identifying the play's connections to the genre of romance, also read the place for its contemporary political resonances. For Goran Stanivukovic, the vagueness of Illyria's representation and its multiple associations, such that "for the English, Illyria could equally be somewhere on the eastern shores of the Adriatic Sea, or [t]he Gulf of Venice, as that sea was called in the early modern period, or somewhere in its hinterland, in Croatia, Carinthia, Istria, Bosnia, or Bohemia," allows for it to be both "a fantasy land but also . . . a historically determined land of the Mediterranean romance."⁸ Stanivukovic's analysis is poised between romance and history. On the one hand, he calls Illyria "an ambivalent location" and "a land of mystery and imagination"; on the other hand, he notes evidence of contemporary knowledge of Illyrian affairs, including a lawsuit over the estate of a rich merchant of Ragusa living in London, which also involved Elizabeth's court trying to prevent the transfer of the large sum of money out of England.⁹ Patricia Parker takes this line of argument further. Detailing the impressive variety of contemporary allusions to Illyria in England in the period before the play's performance, she finds numerous references to Illyria in Shakespeare's other plays, in classical history, in the New Testament and its early modern commentators, in atlases, and in contemporary political discourse on a variety of subjects from history to politics to language.¹⁰ Far from simply a place of romance, Illyria had specific contemporary and historical meaning for Shakespeare's audiences.

In particular, Stanivukovic's and Parker's researches into knowledge of Illyria in Shakespeare's time show that its location on the

eastern Adriatic denotes the status of a disputed frontier region, under threat from the “Turks.” Illyria’s location puts it, as Bruce Smith notes, in the liminal space between self and other, being the border zone between Italy and the Ottoman Empire.¹¹ On the eastern coast of the Adriatic, Illyria is the ancient name for Dalmatia, in the area now known as Croatia and Bohemia, though early modern sources pay more attention to the coastal parts of this region. While under Venetian rule, Dalmatia bordered the Ottoman Empire and appears to have come under their influence as well. Canvassing a number of treatises from the sixteenth century, Parker finds that early modern political or historical accounts show “how much of Illyria was already conquered or threatened by the Turk.”¹² Italian accounts of the Ottoman advance in the region of Illyria, particularly in the interior region of Bosnia, were translated into English, including Giovio’s *Shorte Treatise vpon the Turkes chronicles* (1546), which became a source for Robert Greene’s Turk play *Selimus* and Lanquet’s *Epitome of Chronicles* (1559), which detailed how “the Turkes wasted and burnt Bossina, Croatia, and the farther partes of Illyria.”¹³ As Parker notes, “Multiple other texts in the decades prior to *Twelfth Night* put the increasingly fragmented Illyrian territories at the forefront of the conflict between East and West, both before and after the rise of the Ottoman Turk”; she adds, “in the decades leading up to *Twelfth Night*, texts that invoke the expanding empire of Saracen and Turk repeatedly refer to the historical Illyria’s strategic location.”¹⁴

Despite its associations with the genre of romance, *Twelfth Night* needs to be more carefully considered in terms of its setting on the frontier. By reorienting our geopolitical perspective of Illyria, the play’s Eastern and religious allusions can be seen as part of a larger pattern of interlinked concerns about the threats posed by Ottoman expansion in Eastern Europe. For in connection with the extension of Ottoman influence in the eastern Mediterranean, *Twelfth Night* has a surprising topicality. With the name Orsino for his duke, Shakespeare may have been alluding to the recent visit in 1600 at Elizabeth I’s court of Don Virginio Orsino, the Duke of Bracciano.¹⁵ Although Leslie Hotson’s claim that *Twelfth Night* was first performed at Whitehall during that visit has been rightly rejected—the earliest recorded performance at Middle Temple in 1602 may have been the first¹⁶—the correspondence between Bracciano’s name and the name of the duke in Shakespeare’s play is striking; moreover, Bracciano happened to have a pair of twins, a girl and a boy. With an ancestral palace in Rome but brought up in Florence by his uncle, the Medici Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany, Bracciano represents Italian interests and influence. Even

without a performance at court in Bracciano's honor, Shakespeare may nonetheless have incorporated references to the visit after the duke's departure. His family would become household names to English dramatic audiences. In *The White Devil* (1612), John Webster would dramatize the rather violent history of Bracciano's childhood: his father, Paolo Giordano, strangled his mother in jealousy and then murdered the Cardinal Montalto's nephew in order to marry his wife, Vittoria Accoramboni, whom he coveted.¹⁷

This visit may have brought eastern Mediterranean politics to the forefront of public consciousness in England as Bracciano was involved in continental European efforts to repulse the Ottomans. He was among those who responded to the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolph's call for a crusade as the Ottomans were invading Hungary. Following Hotson's intriguing claim, Peter Milward suggests that the play enacts "an encounter between the Catholic 'house' of the Italian, even Papal, Duke Orsino, and the Protestant 'house' of the English-Welsh Tudor Queen Elizabeth."¹⁸ But, as I have proposed, a reading of the play needs to go beyond the contest between Protestantism and Catholicism to take Islam into account. In the aftermath of the Reformation, the "Turk" was referenced in the polemical controversies between Catholic and Protestant authors as each side denounced the other as less Christian than the Turks.¹⁹ *Twelfth Night* may have alluded to Bracciano's visit as an entry into a consideration of Mediterranean politics deeply connected with the Ottomans. Bracciano fought at the siege of Giavariono (Raab) and was subsequently rewarded by Rudolph in Prague in 1595.²⁰ However, his next military venture, the 1599 capture of Chios from the Ottomans, in which he had supreme command, was a complete fiasco. Hotson suggests that Shakespeare glanced briefly at this sea battle in the play.²¹ If the name Orsino indeed alludes to Bracciano, it may have recalled these continental crusading ventures. Certainly, Shakespeare's choice of Illyria as the setting of the play highlights the contest with the Ottomans playing out in the eastern Mediterranean. Hence, the choice of Illyria was not for its romantic obscurity; rather, it is iconic of the eastern European borderlands threatened but yet not conquered by the Ottomans. Illyria is the quintessential frontier with all the ambivalent politics that this liminal space entails.

EUNUCHS, RENEGADES, AND AMBASSADORS

As a frontier play, *Twelfth Night*, like *Othello*, is concerned with transformations of identity. While the later play foregrounds Othello's conversion and subsequent "unconversion" by Iago, the earlier *Twelfth*

Night touches on conversion more obliquely through allusions to eunuchs and renegades. Such references connect the world of Illyria to the Ottoman sphere of influence. At the same time they also raise questions of the changeability of identity as Europeans came into contact with Muslims. While the play's unmooring of fixed identities begins with Viola's gender bending, gender inversion is only part of the story. Less visible, but nonetheless part of the substratum of the play, is the concern with changeability and religious deviation.

An allusion to the Ottomans comes early in act 1 scene 2, when we discover that Viola had been shipwrecked on Illyria. After hearing about the Lady Olivia's reclusiveness, Viola resolves to disguise herself in order to serve the Duke Orsino. She requests that the captain who saved her present her to the duke as a eunuch: "Thou shalt present me as an eunuch to him. / It may be worth thy pains, for I can sing, / and speak to him in many sorts of music" (1.2.52–4). That suggestion is not brought up again, and it remains a textual oddity. But the captain's response hints that this is an Ottoman allusion. He replies, "Be you his eunuch, and your mute I'll be" (1.2.58). While there were Italian castrati who sang soprano parts in operas, the combination of eunuchs and mutes is one inherited by the Ottomans from the Byzantines: Turkish harems were guarded by eunuchs, whose testicles had been cut off (or crushed), assisted by "mutes," whose tongues had been similarly disposed of.²² Both the castrated male and tongues figure large in the play. If we shift the context eastward, we start to see that the play's exploration of the shifting boundaries of the self takes as analogies European encounters with powerful Islamic empires in the East.

When critics have identified such allusions, they tend to focus on their exotic aspects. Thus, John Astington, who has recognized the "Turkishness" of the exchange between Viola and the captain in act 1 scene 2, comments mainly on how the English viewed eunuchs as "both freakish and foreign, specifically Turkish" and related them to "the mythologized fantasy world of Turkish sexuality."²³ What was perhaps more troubling to early modern Europeans, particularly in the West, was religious heresy made alluring by the material gains possible in the East. Western Europeans were attracted to Islam because of economic opportunities afforded them in the Ottoman Empire. A growing body of work in early modern studies shows that understanding early modern East-West relations in terms of Edward Said's *Orientalism* is misguided at best.²⁴ At worst, "orientalism" as a framework falsifies history. Although the political and economic dominance of Western Europe is true for the imperial age of the

nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in the early modern era, it was marginal. European nations were supplicants to Eastern empires, seeking trading privileges with the Ottomans, Persians, Mughals, and others.²⁵

Whatever they thought of the sexuality of Turkish eunuchs, early modern English people likely considered them symbols of social-climbing renegades. Converting to Islam, or “turning Turk,” became an attractive proposition as it enabled some converts to rise socially. Sometimes that meant becoming a eunuch, as in the case of Samson Rowlie, who rose to a high administrative position in Algeria. By birth a merchant’s son, he became Assan Aga, Eunuch and Treasurer to Uluç Hassan, Ottoman Beylerbey of Algiers. A portrait of Rowlie in a German publication shows him in opulent robes with the full dignity of an important administrator in a great empire even as it teasingly suggests his castration.²⁶ Just as often, though, anxieties about conversion mistranslated ritual circumcision required by Islam and confused it with castration. English plays about conversion show considerable fear of the emasculation of Christian Europeans in Islamic lands. In Philip Massinger’s *The Renegado* (performed 1630), the comic character Gazet is offered a post at the Ottoman court and its accompanying benefits in return for his willingness to be castrated. In response to the offer, the dim-witted Gazet cries in joy, “I am made! An Eunuch!” Massinger offers the ironic juxtaposition of economic gain and bodily loss. As Barbara Fuchs says, “Being ‘made’ in economic terms (becoming a self-made man) really implies being *unmade* as a man.”²⁷

The economic dominance of Muslims is clear in English works of the period, even or especially when they are negatively portrayed. More than simply exoticism, the East represented a place of fabulous wealth, where fortunes are made. Indeed, several allusions in *Twelfth Night* show a fascination with Eastern wealth and power, and particularly fortunes made quickly. The other allusion to the Ottomans in the play comes when Fabian criticizes Malvolio’s pride and likens him to a turkey-cock, the African bird imported through Turkish dominions: “Contemplation makes a rare turkeycock of him—how he jets under his advanced plumes!” (2.5.26–7).²⁸ As a term of opprobrium, criticizing unwonted pride, it was also used in *Henry V*. Gower says of Pistol, “Why, here a comes, swelling like a turkey-cock”; and Fluellen responds: “’Tis no matter for his swellings nor his turkey-cocks” (*Henry V* 5.1.13–5). It is a reference not just to the way turkeys expand their feathers in displays of aggression; Fabian also reminds audiences of actual Englishmen who by converting became rich.

Malvolio's advancement is only imagined, but Fabian is sneering at the false pride of an undeserved elevation. Later Fabian asserts that he would reject such an elevation himself when he declares that he would not give up the sport of gulling Malvolio "for a pension of thousands to be paid from the Sophy" (2.5.156–67), that is to say, from the shah of Persia. Such sums were unheard of in England, as many Elizabethan courtiers with paltry incomes well knew. Fabian's bravado comes from claiming he would willingly turn down what would be considered a king's ransom, but his rejection of the vast sum from a Persian source implies that such gain might be religiously tainted.

Associated with riches, the Eastern frontier is troped as a space where inversions occur, where one can become fabulously wealthy, whether by marrying a princess or working for the sultan. The dark underside to this fantasy, however, is the inversion that is represented by conversion. Conversion is a particularly threatening form of inversion because the boundary between self and other gets erased. The self becomes the other, and the other may seem very much like the self. Converts like Samson Rowlie and many others appear both familiar and strange. The Ottomans were efficient at assimilating and making use of the peoples they conquered, including training up Christian children in their military. In the account of his travels in the Near East, George Sandys notes that Dalmatia, a province of Macedon, a territory encompassed by the classical name of Illyria, paid tribute to the Ottomans.²⁹ Such Christian tributary provinces also contributed manpower to the Ottomans. An anonymous pamphlet, *The Estate of Christians, living under the subjection of the Turke* (1595), laments this practice:

Divers Countries and Nations are in subjection of the Turke...inso-much that there be many thousands of Christians subject to Turkishe tyrannie....All the male children of Christians are written up at the day of their birth, and coming to ten or twelve yeres of their age, are presented to the Turkes officers, who take all such as they finde well made, and like to prove fit men for service in warre, from their parents...to become Turkes, and enemies to God, and their owne fathers and mothers, and kinsfolke, standing the Turke in more sted than his own naturall people.³⁰

Recruited from Christian populations under Ottoman control, these Turkish janissaries represented for Western Europeans the frightening possibility of transformation. Identity was not in the blood but malleable. Moreover, recent work by Charles Argo suggests that

the practice of *devshirme*, or child levy, was not only a practical tool for acquiring manpower but also the ritual aspects of the practice conveyed political ideology from the Ottoman center to the Balkan periphery; *devshirme* was not a continuation of earlier Islamic practices but a new assertion of the Ottoman sultan's universalist powers and a means of controlling the Balkans.³¹ The Ottoman Empire encompassed multiethnic populations of different religions, and their political assimilation became sensationalized in Western European writings.

In *Twelfth Night*, the perception of the negative transformative power of sudden wealth and its link to religious apostasy is embodied by Malvolio: the play figures him as a renegade to explain his class aspirations. Exulting in the success of her scheme to trick Malvolio, Maria says, "Yon gull Malvolio is turned heathen, a very renegado, for there is no Christian that means to be saved by believing rightly can ever believe such impossible passages of grossness" (3.2.59–60). The renegade professes belief in a false text—the Qur'an.³² Likewise, Malvolio, by believing the false letter devised by Maria, believes in an impossibility—that his social superior could love him. His faith in a false text is supposed to clear his way to a higher social station, just as "turning Turk" was the path to rising above one's social class to become rich and powerful. Malvolio's fantasies about Olivia are not sexual but economic. He imagines himself dressed in rich clothing, commanding servants, and admonishing kinsmen—generally acting as master of the house (2.5.26–7). Furthermore, the fake letter misleads him in precisely this way, instructing him to "let thy tongue tang arguments of state" (2.5.131). Malvolio is exposed as desiring the political power that some prominent renegades gained in Islamic societies.

It is not just in his ambitions that Malvolio is a renegade. Patricia Parker suggests the intriguing possibility that with Malvolio transformed as a "renegado," his line about Olivia's handwriting—"These be her very c's, her u's, and her t's" (2.6.78), spelling out an obscene slang for female genitals—may also point to the circumcision or castration of renegades turned Turk.³³ In his delusional state, Malvolio is treated as though he is possessed by the devil: Maria says, "Lo how hollow the fiend speaks within him" (3.4.84), while Toby exhorts him to "defy the devil. Consider he's an enemy to mankind" (3.4.89–90). In their rejection of true religion, renegades would be seen as having gone over to the devil. Moreover, like returning renegades, Malvolio is forced to undergo penance. Toby and company lock him up for their "pleasure and his penance" (3.4.123), and he has to be catechized by

Feste pretending to be the parson, who pronounces Malvolio “more puzzled than the Egyptians in their fog” (4.2.38–9).

The scene can be read as a mock version of the reconversion ceremony the Anglican Church devised for returning renegades, who faced questions about their faith. In his edition of Barbary captivity narratives, Daniel Vitkus reprints the “Laudian Rite for Returned Renegades” (1637), which describes the ceremony in detail.³⁴ While the reassimilation of former renegades into the church was formalized decades after *Twelfth Night*, the problem of what to do with those captives who converted to Islam and then returned to Christendom would have been a long-standing one. In the ceremony set by Archbishop Laud, the returned renegade must have his conscience examined, and then on the first two Sundays stand penitently before the church door as a public manifestation of his remorse. On the third Sunday, he may be brought inside where the minister examines him again, this time in public, and he must publicly repent of his former conversion. In contrast, Feste catechizes Malvolio in a dark dungeon. Rather than a public performance, the form of penance Toby exacts is a private, secret punishment. Seeing Malvolio as a renegade “turning Turk” for profit gives new meaning to that famous line about some having greatness thrust upon them. We might recall in this regard the eunuch Samson Rowlic, a victim who turned his castration into social capital. Malvolio’s loss of liberty, however, is a metaphorical castration for daring to aspire beyond his social class.

But what about Cesario (the cross-dressed Viola), who despite a certain lack, almost marries a woman above “his” station? While it is true that his status is higher than it seems—he tells Olivia that his parentage is “above my fortunes, yet my state is well. / I am a gentleman” (1.5.248–9)—Cesario nonetheless seems unequally matched to Olivia. Yet, the play ends with Viola’s twin married to Olivia, and Viola herself promised to the Duke Orsino. Given Cesario’s apparent identity as a castrated male, and moreover, a foreigner, this turn of events seems to offer the positive narrative of the renegade who wins a fortune. Cesario the eunuch is foil to the renegade Malvolio. Indeed, Olivia seems to urge Cesario to act as the bold renegade, to

take thy fortunes up
Be that thou know’st thou art, and then thou art
As great as that thou fear’st. (5.1.144–6)

If Cesario acknowledges the marriage to Olivia, which would be a betrayal of his master, then he would become Orsino’s social equal in

gaining Olivia's fortune with her hand. Yet, Cesario's transformation is not without its costs, and its dynamic mimics in many ways that of Malvolio's hoped-for elevation. Believing that Cesario has indeed betrayed him, Orsino calls him a "dissembling cub" (6.1.160). But the plot moves in a different trajectory as Cesario is revealed to be a woman. Like Othello, then, who both is and is not the "circumcised dog," Cesario, too, both is and is not a renegade eunuch.

Cesario is given yet another career in the East. When setting up the duel between Cesario and Sir Andrew, Sir Toby tells Andrew that Cesario "has been a fencer to the Sophy" (3.4.247–8). This is likely an allusion to the Sherley brothers, who sought fortunes in Persia. Anthony Sherley was employed by Shah Abbas I in an embassy to European rulers to promote alliances with Persia. The first account of Anthony Sherley published in England was in 1600 and two others in 1601, while further accounts would be published later.³⁵ In 1601 while traveling in Italy, Will Kemp, formerly a clown in Shakespeare's company, met Sir Anthony in Rome, and there was even a play about the Sherleys: Day, Rowley, and Wilkins's *Travels of the Three English Brothers* (1607).³⁶ Shakespeare may have given Cesario, Orsino's envoy, an invented Persian career as he is on a diplomatic mission of love. Sherley himself used the language of love in his supposed oration to the shah, in which he compares his travel to Persia to truth:

As a Pilgrim (who followeth the motion of his affections) is come from farre, to yeelde and pay unto vertue his Zeale and Devotion, and to none other end, if it may please your Maiestie to accept the consecration of his poore Carcas unto you, which my minde hath caried hither to be made an Offering or hanging vow in the Temple of your most singuler vertues, being brought to this point by the Extremitie of my desires.³⁷

However, the accounts, including other European ones, differ in details, including whether Anthony Sherley was indeed Persia's ambassador or whether the true ambassador was in fact Hussein Ali Beg. As Samuel Chew notes, "The uncertain status of the two emissaries is amusingly indicated in an extant letter in which Sherley is described as ambassador: the word 'ambassador' has been stricken out of the text and then reinserted in the margins."³⁸ In an illuminating article that performs a "reciprocal comparison" of English accounts of Sherley against the account by Uruch Beg, a Persian secretary in the embassy who converted to Catholicism in Spain, Jonathan Burton shows how the role of ambassador is culturally specific—the

role of Persian *safir* is narrower than that of the European ambassador. Burton argues for a reading of the Sherleys and their aggrandizement that is cognizant of English appropriation of the foreign, which is “first decultured and then figured as transcultural,” and so doing erases its foreign origins; from one perspective the English were “appropriating Persian imperial authority.”³⁹ There is also the issue of whose agent Anthony Sherley was—did he represent the Persian shah, the Pope, the Spanish king, or the English queen? As Burton notes, Elizabeth’s government acted to suppress the first account because it “saw Sherley’s unauthorized dealings with the Shah as a threat to the stability of Anglo-Ottoman commercial and diplomatic relations.”⁴⁰ Sherley’s uncertain status might suggest that he is a double agent or potentially a betrayer of trusts (as he is depicted in some accounts).

The allusion to Anthony Sherley further highlights the theme of servants betraying masters—whether by accepting the love of their mistress or by imagining that love. Cesario’s missions to Olivia raise that specter as he traverses the space between the two courts. Believing him to be Sebastian whom she married, Olivia pleads for Cesario not to betray her: “Hold little faith, though thou hast too much fear” (5.1.167). In asking Cesario to retain some faith, Olivia expects Cesario to have turned against his master to pledge new allegiance to her. Cesario’s movements between the courts of Orsino and Olivia leads thus to his potential to betray them both. But Cesario is not alone in this. Feste, too, oscillates between the two courts. Although he is a fool at Olivia’s court, when he first appears on stage he is immediately defined as a wanderer. Maria scolds him for having disappeared:

Nay, either tell me where thou hast been or I will not open my lips so wide as a bristle may enter in way of thy excuse. My lady will hang thee for thy absence. (1.5.1–3)

Not receiving a straight reply from him, Maria repeats the threat of hanging and adds another threat of dismissal: “Yet you will be hanged for being so long absent, or to be turned away” (1.5.15–16). Feste’s lack of a fixed location suggests that he is unreliable or perhaps that he will take up employment where he can benefit most. Later, Cesario says to him, “I saw thee late at the Count Orsino’s” (3.1.32). Feste does not deny that he has been at Orsino’s court but asserts that the world is his stage: “Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb like the sun, it shines everywhere” (3.1.33–4).

Refusing to limit himself to one master, Feste is like Cesario in his double allegiance, which opens the possibility for betrayal. Indeed, in the opening of the last act, Orsino shows his familiarity with Feste, saying, "I know thee well. How dost thou, my good fellow?" (5.1.9). While one cannot read too much in the term "fellow," it is nonetheless the term that Olivia uses for Malvolio, which Malvolio misreads as a term of intimacy: praising Jove, Malvolio exclaims, "And when she went away now, 'let this fellow be looked to.' Fellow!—not 'Malvolio,' nor after my degree, but 'fellow'" (3.4.69–71). Malvolio is delusional, but the same term might suggest a closeness between Feste and Orsino that threatens to undermine class boundaries, just as Orsino's intimacy with Cesario leads to an erasure of the line between master and servant. Begging Orsino for money, Feste asks, "Please you to be one of my friends" (5.1.22–3). Orsino assents to be Feste's "friend," or patron, by giving him money. But in return Feste is to become Orsino's messenger to Olivia. In agreeing to this exchange, Feste agrees to be a go-between to Olivia on an embassy—Orsino's profession of love—that he must know would be loathsome to her and that might even constitute, at least in her eyes, a betrayal.

The doubling of emissaries in *Twelfth Night*—once Feste's role as Orsino's other go-between is recognized—speaks to the theme of twins in the play but may also hint at news of the rival Persian ambassadors. Orsino's ambassadors certainly do not achieve what he hopes they would. Feste appears simply to pocket the money he is offered while Cesario catches the eye of Orsino's intended. But in their crossings of the boundaries between households, both envoys make the frontier permeable and unstable.

PIRATES AND BOUNDARY CROSSING

Feste and Cesario's potentially disloyal travel between the two households is but a scaled-down version of the problem Antonio encounters crossing geographical boundaries into Orsino's domain. When he does so, he is arrested by Orsino's officers, who recognize him though he has "no seacap on [his] head" (3.4.296). Antonio is directly identified as pirate by Orsino, who calls him, "Notable pirate, thou salt-water thief" (5.1.63). This piratical theme is another strand in *Twelfth Night's* deployment of Illyria as a frontier. For Illyria's liminality comes also from its reputation for disorderliness and for piracy.

Goran Stanivukovic argues that in the early modern period Illyria was portrayed as a provincial place of violence, associated with

shipwreck, travel, and mutability; it was both internally destabilized by warring noble families and externally threatened by the Turks.⁴¹ In the royalist Richard Brathwaite's prose romance, *Panthalia* (1659), Illyrians are described as "a People naturally servile, uncivile and pusillanimous."⁴² Equally interesting in this roman à clef is that Illyria stands in for Scotland, perhaps a comment on Scotland as a disorderly borderland, whose origins are mythologized in the period as Egyptian.⁴³ Illyrian disorder makes it a haven for pirates. Dalmatian pirates, known in Croatian as "uskoks," targeted Turkish shipping, creating problems for Venice's trading relations with the Ottomans. One Venetian senator, Almorò Tiepolo, complained to the Senate about Dalmatians using the language of religious deviation to depict piracy: "Moreover, there is the universal inclination of all Dalmatia to favor these brigands for these people entertain the heresy (so to speak) that the preservation and maintenance of the Province depends upon the ravages of Uskoks."⁴⁴ Although Dalmatians saw the Turks as religious enemies, they were also discontented with Venetian rule. To Venetians and Ottomans alike, Dalmatia appeared to be a pirate state.

This last border-crossing figure of the frontier space of Illyria, the pirate, speaks less to transformation than to malleability. In interrogating the pirate identities of several characters, *Twelfth Night* shows that identity is a matter of perspective, as Antonio's identity is almost as unstable as Viola/Cesario's. He denies the charge of piracy:

Antonio never yet was thief or pirate,
though, I confess, on base and ground enough
Orsino's enemy. (5.1.68–9)

But Orsino and his men interpret his actions as piracy. Orsino's officer describes Antonio as the man

That took the Phoenix and her freight from Candy,
And this is he that did the *Tiger* board
When your young nephew Titus lost his leg. (5.1.55–7)

Antonio asserts that his are acts of war. When Antonio explains to Sebastian why he would be in danger in Illyria, he describes a sea battle with Orsino's ships:

Once in a sea-fight 'gainst the Count his galleys
I did some service, of such note indeed
That were I ta'en here it would scarce be answered. (3.3.26–8)

Yet, though Antonio suggests that he was engaged in war, Orsino and his men view his acts as those of a pirate, stealing from rich ships. Orsino's own description of Antonio is highly unflattering:

That face of his I do remember well,
Yet when I saw it last it was besmeared
As black as Vulcan in the smoke of war.
A baulking vessel was he captain of,
For shallow draught and bulk unprizable. (5.1.45–53)

Antonio's face is besmeared black from gunpowder. There is much scorn in Orsino's words, evidence of the cultural aversion to firearms, as the period associated them with Satan. Antonio's small ship marks it out as a pirate ship that can travel swiftly and overtake larger ships laden with rich goods.

Piratical activity, however, is not greeted with universal opprobrium. As Orsino says:

With which such scatheful grapple did he make
With the most noble bottom of our fleet
That very envy and the tongue of loss
Cried fame and honour on him. (5.1.50–3)

Beyond Orsino's sarcasm, the paradox is easily solved by the reference to the shifting definitions of piracy in the early modern period, which shade into privateering. One man's pirate is another's hero: take Sir Francis Drake or Sir Walter Raleigh, for example.⁴⁵ Such alternately celebrated and excoriated Englishmen would switch between trade and piracy, depending on opportunity. Complaining about Elizabeth I shutting Venetian shipping out of England and the English overrunning seas everywhere, Nicolò Contarini, later doge of Venice, wrote that when English traders entered the Mediterranean, "they had entered these seas in the guise of brigands, although they brought merchandise too; and they treated every ship they met as an enemy without distinguishing whether it belonged to friend or foe."⁴⁶ While in the Elizabethan era the distinction between merchant and pirate was blurred, the tension between the two became far less tenable when James I banned privateering in 1603. This left unemployed sailors who had previously made a living off Spanish plunder. Many were tempted to join the Turkish corsairs in the expectation of accumulating a fortune, so many that Maffio Michiel, Venetian governor of Zante, denounced the English, saying, "There is not a sailor of that nation but is a pirate."⁴⁷

At the same time, the English were also victims of piracy. Vulnerable to capture in the Mediterranean, they were sold as slaves in North Africa and were sometimes pressured to convert. In her wide-ranging study of early modern British maritime activities, Linda Colley shows that their overwhelming experience overseas was not empire but captivity.⁴⁸ As Nabil Matar and Daniel Vitkus show, English churches and communities worked to raise ransom for these captives, but many captives did not return, making a life instead in Islamic regions.⁴⁹ Sailors who turned renegade include not only those who reached the upper echelons of Muslim societies, but also those who were captives and slaves. The emasculation of Englishmen thus occurs from their condition of captivity, a state in which both the renegade Malvolio and Antonio find themselves.

Antonio is defined as a pirate because he enters Orsino's lands, a risk he takes for Sebastian's sake. However, his accuser also becomes associated with piracy. As Lois Potter notes, by the end of the play, when Orsino threatens to kill Cesario, he compares himself to Thyamis in Heliodorus's *Æthiopica*:

Why should I not (had I the heart to do it),
Like to th'Egyptian thief, at point of death,
Kill what I love. (5.1.113–15)

Thyamis, who tries to kill his captive and beloved Chariclea when in danger from his rivals, only turned pirate because his younger brother usurped his position as hereditary priest of Memphis.⁵⁰ This classical reference fits well Illyria's reputation for piracy, not only in the sixteenth century but also in ancient times. Polybius, for instance, comments on the exposure of the Adriatic region to Illyrian piracy: "The expedition began by making a descent on Elis and Messenia, lands which the Illyrians had always been in the habit of pillaging, because, owing to the extent of their sea-board and owing to the principal cities being in the interior, help against their raids was distant and slow in arriving; so that they could always overrun and plunder those countries unmolested."⁵¹ *Twelfth Night* thus exploits Illyria's long-standing reputation for piracy.

Given that piracy in *Twelfth Night* references both contemporary and classical forms, Shakespeare seems to distinguish between the two. Potter's suggestion that the classical pirate reference in Shakespeare is often treated sympathetically is a cogent one. Orsino's threatened action is also understandable, an act born out of love. Indeed, it makes him a far more suitable match to Viola as this is the first sign

of life in him. Nonetheless, it is an allusion that asks the audience to view Orsino, even if ever so briefly, in the guise of a pirate. The comparison to a classical pirate makes Orsino sympathetic because he turns pirate for love. If so, then, Antonio, arrested for piracy because he followed Sebastian out of love, fits the type. Accuser and accused are both pirates of the same sort, and possibly, they are to be distinguished from the renegade Malvolio.

In this case again, Cesario shares some similarities with Antonio and Orsino, but must also be distinguished from them. He fits uneasily in a play where defying social conventions leads to punishment. A castrated male, Cesario wins the love of Olivia, his social superior. But he is not punished, despite crossing gender boundaries, if not class lines. An enraged Orsino threatens to kill him, but ends up marrying him instead. Cesario functions as an object of desire, and moreover, a desire expressed in religious language. In their meeting, Cesario teases Olivia by offering himself as a sacred text:

What I am and what I would are as secret as maidenhead; to your ears,
divinity; to any others', profanation. (1.5.189–91)

In the exchange with Antonio, Cesario is again figured as a religious object: Antonio complains that he

Relieved him with such sanctity of love,
And to his image, which methought did promise
Most venerable worth, did I devotion. (4.1.326–8)

In turning Cesario, whom he thinks is Sebastian, into a religious icon, Antonio speaks the language of a convert and makes himself the devoted follower.

While Sebastian's marriage to Olivia makes Viola/Cesario appear to have turned against his/her master, Cesario's lack of recognition of Antonio makes Sebastian in turn seem to have betrayed his faith to his friend. In his recriminations about Sebastian's apparent disloyalty, Antonio uses striking metaphors of idolatry. When Cesario disavows him, Antonio bitterly exclaims, "But O, how vile an idol proves this god!" (4.1.330). Antonio thus finds himself betrayed by his idol at the moment when he has crossed dangerous geographical boundaries and most needed Sebastian's loyalty. In Olivia's case, while scoffing at what Cesario has to say as either "a comfortable doctrine" (1.5.196) or worse, "heresy" (1.5.201), Olivia does convert, to fall in love, repudiating her vow to mourn her brother for seven years. But since Cesario is actually female, Olivia's god is as false as Antonio's.

The religious language of *Twelfth Night* is playful, but it also raises the more serious questions of betrayal as well as apostasy. Cesario is associated with betrayal twice in the play; both Olivia and Antonio, each in her or his own way, converts to a false religion and has to be corrected, raising the specter of apostasy. However, the comedic ending means that despite the play's flirtation with the language of idolatry, it manages to evade actual apostasy. In his monograph on "turning Turk," Jonathan Burton finds that despite early modern preoccupation with apostasy, the most common kind of conversion—from Christianity to Islam—is strangely absent from the drama of the period; instead, "apostasy is presented as a feigned and empty simulacrum."⁵² Something of that dynamic is also at work in *Twelfth Night*, which raises the issue of apostasy only to evacuate it of its power.

The images of apostasy, even if only playful, are part of the larger pattern of the play with its dynamic of simultaneous sameness and difference. *Twelfth Night* experiments with this dynamic not simply through the device of look-alike twins but also by exploring the liminal space of Illyria through border-crossing figures: the eunuch, the renegade, the ambassador, and finally, the pirate. As this essay has sought to show, borders divide but they also permit multiple and polydirectional crossings. The border crossers highlight just how permeable the frontier is. Instead of a sharp divide between East and West, *Twelfth Night* offers the liminal space of Illyria, a geographically in-between place that conflates contemporary and classical. The comedy of twins suggests that in this liminal space self and other are confounded, just as with conversion. The particular error here—mistaking something that looks very much like one thing but is in fact its opposite—tells us something important about early modern English perceptions of frontier politics. As pirates can be viewed from two perspectives, so, too, can renegades and other border crossers. In Orsino's words, "One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons, / A natural perspective, that is and is not" (5.1.208–9). Given the malleability of the identity of border crossers, however, it is no surprise Orsino finally calls for his men to "entreat [Malvolio] to a peace" (5.1.367). In that way, even a renegade like Malvolio can still return to the Christian fold.

NOTES

1. All references to *Twelfth Night* and the Shakespearean canon are from *The Norton Shakespeare: Based on the Oxford Edition*, eds. Stephen Greenblatt et al. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), and will hereafter be given parenthetically.

2. In *Religion and Revelry in Shakespeare's Festive World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Phoebe Jensen argues that *Twelfth Night* "embraces the historical association between theater and religion, and avoids the anti-Catholicism of many contemporary celebrations of Friar Tuck-like figures" (193). See also Ken Jackson and Arthur F. Marotti, "The Turn to Religion in Early Modern English Studies," *Criticism* 46.1 (2004): 167–90.
3. Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579–1624* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005); Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Matthew Birchwood, *Staging Islam in England: Drama and Culture, 1640–1685* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007); Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Linda McJannet, *The Sultan Speaks: Dialogue in English Plays and Histories about the Ottoman Turks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
4. Bernadette Andrea, *Women and Islam in Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 37–9.
5. Kenneth Muir, *The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays* (London: Methuen, 1977), 138–9. Muir identifies as sources the anonymous *GPIngannati* (1538), set in Modena, and Barnabe Riche's "Apolonius and Silla," set in Cyprus and Constantinople.
6. Geoffrey Bullough, ed., *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, 8 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 2:284.
7. Constance C. Relihan, "Erasing the East from *Twelfth Night*," in *Race, Ethnicity, and Power in the Renaissance*, ed. Joyce Green MacDonald (Madison, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; London: Associated University Press, 1997), 80.
8. Goran V. Stanivukovic, "'What Country, Friends, Is This?': The Geographies of Illyria in Early Modern England," *Litteraria Pragensia* 12.23 (2002): 5, 15.
9. Goran Stanivukovic, "Illyria Revisited: Shakespeare and the Eastern Adriatic," in *Shakespeare and the Mediterranean: The Selected Proceedings of the International Shakespeare Association World Congress, Valencia, 2001*, eds. Tom Clayton, Susan Brock, and Vicente Forés (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), 400–15, 405–6; for the lawsuit, see 408–9.
10. Patricia Parker, "Was Illyria as Mysterious and Foreign as We Think?," in *The Mysterious and the Foreign in Early Modern England*, eds. Helen Ostovich, Mary V. Silcox, and Graham Roebuck (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 209–33.
11. Bruce R. Smith, ed., *Twelfth Night: Texts and Contexts* (Boston: Bedford/St Martin's, 2001), 128.

12. Parker, "Illyria," 213.
13. Thomas Lanquet, *Epitome of chronicles conteyninge the whole discourse of the histories as well as of this realme of England, as al other countries* (London, 1559), 247; quoted in Parker 215.
14. Parker, "Illyria," 215, 217.
15. Leslie Hotson, *The First Night of Twelfth Night* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1954). I rely on Hotson for details about the Duke of Bracciano, his family, and his visit to England.
16. Anthony Arlidge, *Shakespeare and the Prince of Love: The Feast of Misrule in the Middle Temple* (London: Giles de la Mare, 2000).
17. See Christopher Hibbert, *The Rise and Fall of the House of Medici* (London: Penguin, 1974), 277–8.
18. Peter Milward, "The Religious Dimension of Shakespeare's Illyria," in *Shakespeare and the Mediterranean: The Selected Proceedings of the International Shakespeare Association World Congress, Valencia, 2001*, eds. Tom Clayton, Susan Brock and Vicente Forés (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), 382.
19. See Dimmock, "The 'Turk' and 'Turkishness' in England, 1529–1571," in *New Turkes*, 20–86.
20. Hotson, *The First Night*, 40–1.
21. *Ibid.*, 41–2.
22. The Byzantines may have themselves borrowed the institution from earlier eastern practices, such as the political eunuchism of the Archaemenid Persians: see Franz Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and his Time*, ed. William C. Hickman, trans. Ralph Manheim (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 442; Lord [John Balfour] Kinross, *The Ottoman Centuries: The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Empire* (New York: HarperCollins, 1977), 146–7. See also Mehmet Fuat Köprülü, *Some Observations on the Influence of Byzantine Institutions on Ottoman Institutions*, trans. Gary Leiser (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999). For Byzantine eunuchs in harems, see Shaun F. Tougher, "Byzantine Eunuchs: An Overview, with Special Reference to Their Creation and Origin," in *Women, Men and Eunuchs: Gender in Byzantium*, ed. Liz James (London: Routledge, 1997), 168–84, and *The Eunuch in Byzantine History and Society* (London: Routledge, 2008); Kathryn M. Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).
23. John Astington, "Malvolio and the Eunuchs: Texts and Revels in *Twelfth Night*," *Shakespeare Survey: An Annual Survey of Shakespeare Studies and Production* 46 (1993): 27.
24. See, for example, Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London's Theater of the East, 1576–1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); and Lisa

- Jardine and Jerry Brotton, *Global Interests: Renaissance Art Between East and West* (London: Reaktion, 2000).
25. For Elizabeth I's negotiations with the Ottoman Porte, see S. A. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey* (London: British Academy, 1977).
 26. Gerald MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580–1720* (Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 184–6.
 27. Barbara Fuchs, "Faithless Empires: Pirates, Renegadoes, and the English Nation," *ELH* 67.1 (2000): 64.
 28. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2nd ed., 1989), the word "turkey-cock" was "in the sixteenth-century synonymous with *Guinea-cock* or *Guinea-fowl*, an African bird known to the ancients (the *μελεαγρις* of Aristotle, *meleagris* of Varro and Pliny), the American bird being at first identified with or treated as a species of this. The African bird is believed to have been so called as originally imported through the Turkish dominions; it was called *Guinea-fowl* when brought by the Portuguese from Guinea in West Africa. After the two birds were distinguished and the names differentiated, *turkey* was erroneously retained for the American bird, instead of the African. From the same imperfect knowledge and confusion *Meleagris*, the ancient name of the African fowl, was unfortunately adopted by Linnaeus as the generic name of the American bird."
 29. Sandys cited in Smith, ed., *Twelfth Night*, 128.
 30. *The Estate of Christians, living under the subjection of the Turke* (London, 1595), 1–2.
 31. For a reading of *devşirme* practices in terms of ritual to convey Ottoman political ideology, see Charles Argo, "Ottoman Political Spectacle: Reconsidering the Devşirme in the Ottoman Balkans, 1400–1700," unpublished PhD diss., University of Arkansas, 2005.
 32. However, for a cogent argument that the Christian West read the Qur'an not just polemically but also philologically, see Thomas E. Burman, *Reading the Qur'an in Latin Christendom, 1140–1560* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).
 33. Parker, "Illyria," 212.
 34. Vitkus, ed., *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 361–6.
 35. *A True Report of Sir Anthony Shierlies Journey overland to Venice, from thence by sea to Antioich, Aleppo, and Babilon, and soe to Casbine in Persia* (London, 1600); William Parry, *A New and Large Discourse of the Travels of Sir Anthony Sherley* (London, 1601); George Manwaring, *A True Discourse of Sir Anthony Sherley's Travels into Persia* (London, 1601); Anthony Nixon, *The Three English Brothers* (London, 1607); *Sir Anthony Sherley His Relation of His Travels into Persia* (London, 1613).

36. John Day, William Rowley, and George Wilkins were names entered in the *Stationer's Register* (June 8, 1607) for *The Travailes of the Three English Brothers*. Cited in Samuel Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England during the Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), 505. On Kemp, see Chew 275–7.
37. *A True Report of Sir Anthony Shierlies Journey*, 2.
38. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose*, 271.
39. Jonathan Burton, "The Shah's Two Ambassadors: *The Travels of the Three English Brothers* and the Global Early Modern," in *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture: Mediation, Transmission, Traffic, 1550–1700*, eds. Brinda Charry and Gitanjali Shahani (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), 28, 38. Burton borrows the term "reciprocal comparison" from Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 8.
40. Burton, "The Shah's Two Ambassadors," 33.
41. Stanivukovic, "'What Country,'" 5–20.
42. Richard Brathwaite, *Panthalia: Or The Royal Romance. A Discourse Stored with infinite variety in relation to State-Government And Passages of matchless affection gracefully interveined, And presented on a Theatre of Tragical and Comical State, in a successive continuation to these Times* (London, 1659), 32.
43. A version of the story of how the Egyptian pharaoh's daughter Scota's son Goídel Glas was the ancestors of the Gaels can be found in the fifteenth-century work of Scottish chronicler Walter Bower, *Scotichronicon: in Latin and English*, 9 vols. (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987).
44. Alberto Tenenti, *Piracy and the Decline of Venice 1580–1615*, first published as *Venezia e i Corsari* (1961), trans. Janet and Brian Pullen (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 5. On "uskoks," see Tenenti 3–15.
45. C. M. Senior, *A Nation of Pirates: English Piracy in Its Heyday* (New York: Crane, Russak and Co., 1976).
46. Contarini, *Histoire* vol. II, book vi, f. 31v (Archivio di Stato, Venice, *Miscellanea Codici*, no. 80); quoted in Tenenti 58.
47. Quoted in Senior, *Nation of Pirates*, 83.
48. Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World 1600–1850* (London: Pimlico, 2003).
49. Nabil Matar, "Introduction: England and Mediterranean Captivity, 1577–1704," in Vitkus, ed., *Piracy*, 24–32.
50. Lois Potter, "Pirates and 'Turning Turk' in Renaissance Drama," in *Travel and Drama in Shakespeare's Time*, eds. Jean-Pierre Maquerlot and Michèle Willems (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 124. See Heliodorus, *An Aethiopian History*, trans. Thomas Underdowne (London: David Nutt, 1895), 1: 29. In 1733, Lewis Theobald first suggested Heliodorus as the source of the allusion.

51. Quoted in Henry Arderne Ormerod, *Piracy in the Ancient World: An Essay in Mediterranean History* (Liverpool: The University Press of Liverpool; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1924), 50. Also, see “Illyricum” and “Piracy” in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, eds. Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Harry J. Dell, however, argues that the evidence for early Illyrian piracy (before 231 BC) is tenuous (“The Origin and Nature of Illyrian Piracy,” *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 16.3 [July, 1967]: 344–58).
52. Burton, *Traffic and Turning*, 93.

CHAPTER 10



“A TURK’S MUSTACHIO”: ANGLO- ISLAMIC TRAFFIC AND EXOTIC LONDON IN BEN JONSON’S *EVERY MAN OUT OF HIS HUMOUR* AND *ENTERTAINMENT AT BRITAIN’S BURSE*

Justin Kolb

In Ben Jonson’s *Every Man out of His Humour* (1599), the vain-glorious knight Puntarvolo, an energetic self-fashioneer “wholly consecrated to singularity,” dictates the contract that will govern his upcoming adventure to “the Turk’s court in Constantinople” and his relationship with his business partners (4.3.10–11).¹ He outlines the means of transportation he may use, provisions to guard against him or his companion turning Turk, the feeding of his dog and cat, and a promise to bring back “testimony of the performance” by bringing “thence a Turk’s mustachio, my dog a Grecian hare’s lip, and my cat the train or tail of a Thracian rat” (4.3.36–7). He also describes an elaborate set of provisions designed to maintain the delicate balance between social openness and guardedness necessary for such an adventure:

That, after the receipt of his money, [the partner] shall neither in his own person, nor any other, by direct or indirect means, as magic, witchcraft, or other such exotic arts, attempt, practise, or complot

anything to the prejudice of me, my dog or my cat: neither shall I use the help of any such sorceries or enchantments, as unctions to make our skins impenetrable, or to travel invisible by virtue of a powder or a ring, or to hang any three-forked charm about my dog's neck, secretly conveyed into his collar: (understand you?) but that all will be performed secretly, without fraud or imposture. (4.3.24–33)

Like most of the other characters in *Every Man Out*, Puntarvolo is attempting to preserve his affected *humour* in the face of an urban environment overcrowded with human and inhuman actors and influences that would disrupt its delicate composure.² These contractual safeguards ultimately fail before he even departs; his dog is poisoned by Macilente, and he is goaded into a violent rage by Carlo Buffone, sealing up the railer's offending mouth with candle wax. His loss of control is akin to his "turn[ing] Turk" (3.4.13), a loss of self-possession that nullifies his carefully constructed agreements and prior self.³

Part of the comedy of Puntarvolo's contract is that he invokes the familiar peril of turning Turk on a Mediterranean voyage and then immediately sets about protecting himself from his fellow Englishmen's efforts to bend his will.⁴ Prone to "over-Englishing his travels," Puntarvolo relocates the anxiety that attended English contact with the Islamic world to England itself.⁵ As Daniel Vitkus argues, "The idea of conversion that terrified and titillated Shakespeare's audience was a fear of the loss of both essence and identity in a world of ontological, ecclesiastical, and political instability" and was linked "to a larger network of moral, sexual, and religious uncertainty which touched English Protestants directly."⁶ This essay seeks to connect two seemingly disparate corners of this network of uncertainty: the fear of turning Turk prompted by Anglo-Islamic exchange and the identity anxiety produced by life in the consumer economy of London.⁷ In the hands of Jonson, turning Turk is subordinated to the problem of maintaining one's *humour* in a city where exotic commodities and one's countrymen are the real perils.

The artificial persons crafted and satirized by city comedies like Jonson's were products of a rapidly globalizing urban consumer economy that was extensively shaped by contact with the Islamic world, both in the Mediterranean and beyond.⁸ Particularly central to this traffic was the Ottoman Empire, the "inheritor of Euro-Asian trading networks and participant in the contest for commercial hegemony on the economic space stretching from Venice to the Indian Ocean."⁹ The Ottoman Empire was admired by the early modern English for

its wealth, power, and modernity and despised for its religion, heterogeneous national character, and avarice. John Foxe's claim that "the Turke is the...open and manifest enemy against Christ and his Church" shared cultural space with the Mercury in a Thomas Heywood pageant singing that "the potent *Turke* (though in faith aduerse) / Is proud that he with *England* can commerce."¹⁰ Fear and anxiety produced by Turkish power coincided with fascination with the exotic goods and narratives that were rapidly reshaping city life. Language derived from points of contact with the Islamic world was put to work describing the artifice and mutability of city characters. The epithets "Scanderbeg" and "Tamburlaine" quickly descended from denoting martial prowess to signifying the rootless roguery and pretense of underworld bravos.¹¹ The Turkish title *Chiause* came to mean "cozener" after an expensive London visit by Sultan Mustafa I's emissary in 1607.¹² Techniques of disguise, dissimulation, and resistance described in the accounts of Mediterranean merchants and intelligencers found a new home in the petty intrigues of city comedy. Characters in both Turk plays and city comedies use similar means to preserve themselves from undesired influence: Puntarvolo's promise not to protect himself with rings and charms echoes the "relic" with the power "to keep the owner free from violence" that protects Paulina from Asambeg in Philip Massinger's *The Renegado* (1.1.147–9).¹³

Most importantly for this essay, many city comedies, especially Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* and *Every Man out of His Humour*, are structured around the efforts of characters to maintain self-control and an affected humour in the face of the myriad pressures, influences, and temptations offered by urban life. In Jonson's humour plays, strenuous attempts at self-possession tend to collapse into uncontrolled passion and subsequent humiliation, as when Puntarvolo "turns Turk" and explodes in rage at Carlo Buffone. The pressures urban life put on one's humour were partially understood in terms derived from traffic with the Islamic world, and vice versa; Othello's derangement by baseless jealousy was influenced by that of the shopkeeper Thorello in *Every Man in His Humour*.¹⁴ Traffic with the Islamic world was an acknowledged material cause of the consumer economy that produced the forms of urban life documented by Jonson. His *Every Man out of His Humour* and his *Entertainment at Britain's Burse* illustrate how tropes and modes of thought from Anglo-Islamic traffic were refigured in city comedy and civic pageantry, two genres not typically associated with Turks and Moors.¹⁵ Jonson's use of these tropes is bound up in his efforts to describe the effects of global commerce on English society and character, and the

inadvertent, accidental, or perverse relationships and dependencies this new social order created. Consequently, his treatment of Anglo-Islamic exchange deals less with any threat it posed to the idea of a coherent Christian self and more with the opportunities for consumption, self-fashioning, self-delusion, and interpersonal exchange that this traffic offered.

By 1599, when *Every Man out of His Humour* was first performed, over two decades of traffic with Turks had produced an English documentary and experiential archive with some fairly well-established tropes detailing the perils to body, soul, and treasure that faced a traveler in Ottoman lands. While commerce required extensive interaction with Muslims and other non-Christians, Englishmen were urged to keep a wary distance from their Turkish hosts and trading partners. Travel narratives placed great emphasis on the proper conduct of the Englishman abroad and suggested modes of behavior that would both enable traffic and preserve a fragile English self. Englishmen were urged to restrict their interactions with the Turk to commerce, to buy and sell and never become too intimate with their trading partners, lest they be tempted or coerced into turning. For instance, appended to Hugh Goughe's *The Offspring of the House of Ottomanno*, a 1569 collection of translated excerpts from continental texts, is a lexicon for a traveler in Muslim lands containing pieces of "a dialogue containing questions, and answers of a Turk with a Christian," written in both English and Turkish.¹⁶ The Christian, alone in a strange land, resists the invitations of a suspiciously friendly Turk. The Christian is abroad to "exercise merchandise" or because his "business is into Asia." Noncommercial reasons are not offered for his conversation with the Turk. The Christian is cordial, but cagey and aloof, while the Turk is inquisitive and insinuating, eager to learn the Christian's plans, his business, and any news "spoken of in your parts." The Turk learns that the Christian is alone and invites him to his lodging, whereupon the reader is taught to show polite interest and commit the Turk to Allah, but to refuse any and all invitations, saying, "I will not go that way."¹⁷ When the Turk cajoles, asking, "Oh, whom do you fear? Why come you not?," the Christian is steadfast, insisting "[m]y journey is not that way" and bidding the Turk "a prosperous night."¹⁸

The phrasebook's implicit advice is to avoid any sort of intimacy with the Turks while trading in their lands, but, as Jonathan Burton observes, "The nature of the threat to the dialogue's traveler is never made clear."¹⁹ The author includes the dialogue, he explains, so that "thou maist understand, how gross and barbarous [Turks] be," but

it contains no evidence of gross and barbarous behavior. Instead the dialogue makes its point through an ominous mood, firing the reader's imagination with the suggestion of unnamed horrors and temptations lying just off the strict path of commerce in the intimate spaces of the Turk.²⁰ Puntarvolo's indentures are an example of the strictures travelers set on themselves. He sets strict limits on how and how long he and his partner will travel: "The time limited for our return is a year, and if either of us miscarry, the whole venture is lost" (4.3.11–12). The failure of these conditions results from Jonson's reversal of the traditional narrative. In his narrative of encounter with the exotic East, Englishmen interact not with real Turks, but with imported goods and symbolic tokens, like the "Turk's mustachio" Puntarvolo promises to bring home. It is precisely this commerce that destabilizes English identities, presenting numerous opportunities for self-fashioning and disordered passion. In this exoticized space, an Englishman's own countrymen are more likely to try to turn him away from himself than the Turk.

"THIS MASTACCIO A LA TURQASIA": JONSON'S ENTERTAINMENT AT BRITAIN'S BURSE

Ben Jonson never wrote a play with Turkish, Persian, Arab, or Moorish characters, or one set in the Islamic world.²¹ This absence makes Jonson a bit of an outlier among his playwright peers, as writers ranging from Shakespeare to Middleton to Dekker to Peele at least touched on Islamic subjects. One can perhaps see a bit of the lascivious Turk in Volpone, who is attended by a eunuch and a dwarf and offers to transform Celia into a one-woman seraglio:

Then I will have thee in more modern forms,
Attired like some sprightly dame of France,
Brave Tuscan lady, or proud Sophy's wife;
Or the Grand Signior's mistress; and, for change,
To one of our most artful courtesans,
Or some quick Negro, or cold Russian. (3.7.225–31)²²

Volpone's comparison of himself to the Turkish Grand Signior or Persian Sophy in the course of listing the sexual roles he would have Celia put on makes these Muslim potentates figures for both sexual rapacity and a sort of cosmopolitan appetite, acquiring its delicacies from around the globe. The sultan is figured not as a mighty statesman or dreadful infidel, but as a consumer par excellence, a man of

wealth and taste able to obtain the finest things on earth to glut his appetites. Jonson is less concerned with any specific reference to these monarchs or their nations than he is with using them to describe two major subjects of his comedies: the vast possibilities for consumption in a newly globalized marketplace, and the ensuing mutability of human beings. In Volpone's libidinous litany, Celia can become any woman in the world with just another costume acquired from the global trade in textiles. For Jonson, the mutable identities produced by Mediterranean trade are subordinated to an examination of the new modes of human action and association presented by a globalized urban consumer economy.

Had Volpone been a Londoner, he would have likely obtained Celia's fantastic garments at one of the city's emporiums of foreign trade, perhaps the Royal Exchange, or the New Exchange, a shopping center celebrated by Jonson in a work that he apparently sought to expunge from his canon. In 1609, Robert Cecil, earl of Salisbury, commissioned him to write an entertainment for the opening of the New Exchange, also known as Britain's Bourse, an aristocrat-sponsored emporium for exotic imported goods and ostensibly a classier alternative to Gresham's old Royal Exchange.²³ The *Entertainment at Britain's Bourse* was the last of several commissions from Cecil, one of Jonson's most important patrons.²⁴ Like most of Jonson's civic entertainments, the *Entertainment at Britain's Bourse* for a long time was known only from contemporary documents (a description by Cecil's *homme de affaires* Thomas Wilson, surviving bills, ambassadorial dispatches, and printed chronicles). The details all suggested what David Riggs describes as "something quite anomalous: a royal entertainment in praise of trade."²⁵ The probably incomplete text was only rediscovered in a bound volume of state papers in 1997, leading editor James Knowles to suggest that its long absence from Jonson's canon was "probably the production of Jonson's careful self-presentation and self-censorship."²⁶

The discovery of a Jonson entertainment "which, in praising a commercial building contains wholesale, apparently unironic, celebration of eastwards and westwards colonialism, and of the marvels of London's developing consumer culture" complicates the long-standing critical view that Jonson's city texts were motivated by what L. C. Knights called a "general anti-acquisitive attitude."²⁷ *Britain's Bourse* stands in stark contrast to its immediate contemporary, *Epicoene*, which mercilessly satirizes the very consumerism and mingling of aristocrats and bourgeoisie that sustained the New Exchange. Built on the Strand by Cecil, the New Exchange "epitomized the conjunction

of court and city,” bringing courtiers and ambitious bourgeoisie face to face with the merchants, projectors, and adventurers who equipped their self-fashioning.²⁸ Like the Royal Exchange, Britain’s Burse was, in the words of Lawrence Stone, “a sort of stock exchange and estate agency . . . a kind of bazaar for the upper-class clientele which normally passed along the Strand between the Law Courts and the royal palace at Westminster, and the Inns of Court and the City to the east.”²⁹ The New Exchange was a monument to the dawn of institutionalized capitalism in London, its first building stones fittingly taken from the abandoned monastic buildings of Saint Augustine’s in Canterbury.³⁰ While we might dismiss *Britain’s Burse* as a fragmentary piece of mercenary hackwork, a careful reading of its encomiums to commerce reveals a Jonson whose unease with the marketplace was matched by his fascination with its power to organize human actors and the things they exchanged in new and potent combinations. In describing the paths that bring fine wares to London, Jonson repositions the Turk within the larger systems offered by early capitalism, making *Britain’s Burse* a surprisingly precise document of how the Turk was domesticated by an increasingly mercantilist England.

Just as the New Exchange secularized the stones of the monastery, the *Entertainment at Britain’s Burse* secularizes the Turk, transforming sultans and renegades from enemies of the faith into mediators in a vast network of circulating goods that stretches from England to China. The entertainment features a shopboy crying, “What do you lack? what is’t you buy?” and offering a vast litany of “Veary fine China stuffles, of all kindes and quallities” (lines 73–4). Housewares like “Purslane dishes” (82) and “Basons, Ewers, Cups, Cans, voyders, Toothpicks, Targets” (84) are indiscriminately mixed with items more fit for a *wunderkammer* or menagerie, like “Estrich Egges, Birds of Paradise, Muskcads, Indian Mice, Indian rats, China dogges and China cattes” (79–81).³¹ While *Britain’s Burse* has only three human actors, as attested by both the surviving text and Thomas Wilson’s report to Cecil on the planning of the show, it no doubt featured an abundance of inhuman actors, the china and feathers and exotic gewgaws that were the real stars.³² Wilson’s letter complains about the lack of the “divers toys whereupon conceits are ministered” because “yet doth not the town afford such plenty as we expected.”³³ The easy abundance offered by the entertainment remains potential, and Wilson apparently had to scramble to obtain the necessary goods.³⁴

While the goods for sale come primarily from China and the Indies, the figure of the Turk appears as a mediator through whom these commodities must pass in one form or another. The master of

the shop takes over from the shopboy, urging him to sell the crowd “more gently” (88). He shows off his porcelain dishes, which are not “false and adulterate” (103), as in other shops, but “such as the graund Signior eates in I assure you” (104–5).³⁵ The sultan, cast here as the owner of the finest things on earth, becomes a mark of quality. He favors these dishes for a property that raises some sinister implications: “On my sincerity, you can put no poison in these, but they presently breake or discolour, out, of a naturall disloyalty to man” (105–6). The dishes are useful because they will not passively go along with an enemy’s attempt to poison their possessor, and this ability has been tested in the rarefied confines of the Sublime Porte.³⁶ The insistence that well-heeled Londoners might need such disloyal dishes suggests a parallel between the intrigues of the seraglio and the Strand. Puntarvolo’s unlucky dog might have benefited from such a dish.

Another familiar Turkish character, the renegade corsair, appears when the master invokes the Burse’s competition. As for the cheap china that will come to market “at the next return of the Hollanders fleete from the Indyces” (175), he assures his customers that “Warde the man of warre, for that is nowe the honorable name for a pyrate; hath taken theyr greatest Hulke, and in theyr second with a crosse barre shot . . . hath mode such a spoyle in the pursland, as it is thought they will come whom [home?] verye much dissolued” (177–81). Jonson invokes the famous renegade pirate John Ward, the protagonist of Robert Daborne’s *A Christian Turned Turk*, not as a damned apostate or romantic rebel, but as an honorable ally of the English merchant, sailing beyond the Pillars of Hercules to prey on the Dutch East India Company. He is meaningful to the audience to the extent that he affects the price of porcelain in London.

In addition to china, the New Exchange apparently specializes in optical devices, including “a convexe [mirror] that deminisheth the formes & make your la[dy] looke like ye Queen of Farice” (188), evoking a familiar figure of artificial wonder from *The Alchemist*, and “[a] concaue that augmentes them. This glase would have made the great duchman look more like a Sarasen then he did” (189–91). He also shows off a perspective glass with which “I will read you . . . ye distinction of any mans Clothes ten nay twenty mile of ye colour of his horse” (198–200). While such glasses let one see others transformed, the Burse also offers the means to transform oneself, in the form of a “file of vissards & beardes” that allow the wearer to take on a variety of shapes (214).

Again, the figure of the Turk is invoked to describe these changes—“This mastaccio *a la Turqasia*: came in a year or two before with

casimere, but was borrowed by the Duke of shorditch in the same showe, an indeed fell of after the first hot service in the low cown-tryes" (227–30).³⁷ In one sentence we see a double displacement of the mustache of the mighty Turk, as it becomes first a London fashion inspired by the 1578 visit of John Casimir, Prince Palatine, and then a prop of the Duke of Shoreditch's company that will not stay on the stage-Casimir's lip during the battle scenes.³⁸ The label "Turk" becomes detached from the people and empire it once denoted, and becomes part of the everyday lexicon of the consumer economy, denoting particular commodities for sale.

In the face of the amazing transformations made possible by the wares at Britain's Burse, the transformations threatened by the distant Turk begin to seem very small. Global trade has raised the specter not of turning Turk, but of a city that is so equipped with the tools of self-fashioning that it becomes as heterogeneous, strange, and mutable as far-off Constantinople. It is the things that pass through the hands of Turks and other foreigners that contain the power to change men. The power of exotic objects, not exotic people, was Jonson's subject when writing about England's traffic with the world. *Britain's Burse* is animated by a potent fascination with the fine devices of the East. It ends with a mechanical marvel, as "Apollos statue singe[s] / Gaynste natures lawe" (289–90). Knowles argues that Apollo was almost certainly a human singer, most likely Nicholas Lanier, rather than an automaton, but the spectacle of one of the wares at the New Exchange coming to life, after tales of disloyal dishes and storied mustachios, highlights the powerful and uncanny agency that exotic objects possessed in Anglo-Islamic traffic, and how central these objects were to the encounters most English people had with foreign lands.³⁹ Like the "mastaccio *a la Turqasia*" that has passed over so many lips to arrive on the Strand, they encountered the Turk through the tokens that traffic brought them. The centrality of these tokens to English imaginations of the Islamic world, and the sorts of self that emerged from the society they constructed, is also one of the major subjects of *Every Man out of His Humour*.

"TESTIMONY OF THE PERFORMANCE":
TURKISH TOKENS AND TRAVELERS' FOLLY IN
EVERY MAN OUT OF HIS HUMOUR

The sort of "Turk's mustachio" sold at the New Exchange is also mentioned in *Every Man out of His Humour* (4.3.36), where Puntarvolo promises to bring one home to London as "testimony of the

performance” of his journey (4.3.35). The joke is that Puntarvolo could just as easily acquire such testimony from any company of players.⁴⁰ As for his pets’ tokens, how could anyone possibly tell whether the dog carries “a Grecian hare’s lip” or the cat the “tail of a Thracian rat” (4.3.36–7), as opposed to bits of English rodents? Puntarvolo’s ideas of Turkey are entirely derived from the circulating goods already available in London and showed off at entertainments like *Britain’s Burse*. His expedition promises to bring back nothing that London does not already have in excess. Puntarvolo’s ridiculous and ultimately futile indentures are part of Jonson’s playful inversion of the traditional tale of turning Turk, in which the Turk seeks to win the Christian’s soul by any means, but the Christian can resist through faith, courage, and careful self-regulation. In the place of this Turkey, Jonson presents an exoticized England where the real derangements of the soul are those Englishmen inflict on themselves with exotic goods—the “Switzer’s knot / On his French garters” (112–13) that Asper rails against in the play’s induction—and where no affected humour or legal stricture can withstand the assaults of foes as ruthless as Macilente or as unceasingly abrasive as Carlo Buffone. Macilente takes on the role of Turk, stripping away his victim’s cherished identities by any means, and making a mockery of the careful precautions he has taken to preserve himself. The *insula fortunata* on which the play is set holds more dangers to the self than Constantinople ever could.

The dangers Puntarvolo seeks to avoid are described in texts like the anonymous 1597 book *The Policie of the Turkish Empire*, which insists that renegades convert because they are “not only rewarded with store of money, livings, and other necessities for their maintenance, but commonly they are preferred and advanced to great offices.”⁴¹ Thomas Dekker’s *If This Be Not A Good Play The Devil is In It* (1612) puts it even more bluntly, answering the question, “What ist turns you into a Turke?,” with: “That for which many their religion / Most men their Faith, all change their honesty, / Profit” (4.1.6–9).⁴² Turkish efforts to win Christian souls were thought to be a pervasive part of the atmosphere of any voyage to their lands. *The Policie of the Turkish Empire* warns:

The Turks desire nothing more than to draw both Christians and other to embrace their religion and to turn Turk... For this cause they do plot and devise sundry ways how to gain them to their faith. (19–20)

The malevolent Turk becomes a sort of pervasive subtle intelligence behind the myriad experiences and influences presented to the traveler,

making every sort of encounter suspect. Plays and published travel narratives tend to counter this anxiety by highlighting moments of resistance in which Islam's "seductiveness and power are ultimately shown to be merely surface," but some accounts highlight the derangement the expected paranoia could cause in English travelers.⁴³

The diary of English organ-maker Thomas Dallam, sent to the imperial city by the Levant Company in 1599 to assemble a mechanical organ for Sultan Mehmed III, recalls a night spent in a "Darke uncomfortable house" three days' journey from Constantinople.⁴⁴ Thomas Glover, secretary to English ambassador Henry Lello and later ambassador himself, had spent the evening speaking "verrie muche of Aderes, snyakes, and sarpentes" and the other "strainge varmen and beasts he had sene in that contrie" (54).⁴⁵ Going out to "make water" late at night, a member of the party feels his untied garter blow around his leg and cries out, "A sarpente! a sarpente! a sarpente!" The outburst causes chaos inside the house:

On the other side, we that weare in the house, did thinke that he had said: Assalted! assalted! for before nyghte we doubted that some tritcherie would happen unto us in that towne, so that we thought the house had bene beset with people to cutt our Throates. (55)

Venomous serpents transform easily into murderous Turks in the unsettled imaginations of these Englishmen. In the ensuing uproar, one man "strouke about him with his sorde, and beate down the shelve and broke the pitcheres and plateres which stood thar on" and another attempts to escape through the chimney (55), which promptly collapses on his head. An affected paranoia was as likely to result in smashed crockery as heroic resistance.

Puntarvolo's turning Turk draws on this aspect of the experiential archive produced by Anglo-Islamic exchange, as carefully cultivated characters guard against imagined foes rather than real ones, causing comic descents into quarrelsomeness and humiliation. Macilente mockingly refers to Puntarvolo's planned adventure as he poisons the dog, "Sir, you'd be travelling; but I'll give you a dram shall shorten your voyage... Now go to the Turk's court in the Devil's name, for you shall never go o' God's name" (5.1.74–7). Carlo Buffone's joke that Puntarvolo should "flay me your dog presently, but in any case keep the head, and stuff his skin well with straw, as you see those dead monsters at Bartholomew Fair" (5.6.37–40) finally shatters the knight's composure and triggers a shocking spasm of violence. The man who earlier took pride in his wit and erudition is reduced to sputtering oaths—"Sdeath,

you slave, you bandog you" (5.6.53)—as he beats Carlo and threatens to kill any man who intervenes. In the face of this onslaught by a man driven out of his humour and turned Turk, Carlo begs, "Hold in thy fury, and 'fore heaven, I'll honor thee more than the Turk does Mahomet" (5.6.62–3). Candle wax soon seals his lips and ends these pleas. Puntarvolo mockingly asks, "So; now are you out of your humour, sir?" (5.6.77). The new convert quickly converts another.

While Anglo-Islamic traffic is clearly a minor theme in Jonson's plays, he nevertheless drew on its commercial and experiential legacy in crafting models of the humours produced by a globalized consumer marketplace. The elaborate networks of transportation and transformation produced by global trade and described in the *Entertainment at Britain's Bourse* informed his efforts to describe urban life. He domesticated the process of turning Turk in describing Puntarvolo's descent from cultivated gentility to brutish rage in *Every Man out of His Humour*. Taken together, these two works are prescient documents of the domestication of the legacy of Anglo-Islamic traffic as the experiences and anxieties it produced were folded into the fabric of life in an increasingly cosmopolitan London.

NOTES

1. Ben Jonson, "Persons of the Play," *Every Man Out of His Humour*, vol. 1, *The Complete Plays of Ben Jonson*, ed. G. A. Wilkes (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), 13–14. Unless otherwise indicated, all subsequent references to the play (act.scene.line numbers) will be indicated parenthetically.

When the Ottoman Empire captured Constantinople in 1453, the city's name was changed to Istanbul. However, English and other European texts continued to refer to the city as "Constantinople," and I follow their usage.

2. In early modern texts, the word *humour* at once denotes the four natural fluids that circulated in the body; the physical, mental, and emotional states that arise from their combination and interaction with influences from outside the body; and one's chosen demeanor or self-image. The induction to Jonson's *Every Man out of His Humour* offers a concise description of how the humours were thought to function:

[A humour] is a quality of air or water,
And in itself holds these two properties,
Moisture and fluxture: as, for demonstration,
Pour water on this floor, 'twill wet and run:
Likewise the air, forced through a horn or trumpet,

Flows instantly away, and leaves behind
 A kind of dew; and hence we do conclude,
 That whatsoe'er hath fluxture and humidity,
 As wanting power to contain itself,
 Is humour. So in every human body
 The choler, melancholy, phlegm, and blood,
 By reason they flow continually
 In some part, and are not continent,
 Receive the name of humours. (Ind.88–102)

Given the specific medical and psychological ideas associated with the humours, I have chosen to retain the British spelling, *humour*. I do this in order to reflect the spelling in my primary texts and maintain a distinction from the modern American definition of *humor*.

3. Connecting *Othello* to contemporary accounts of Englishmen “turning Turk,” converting to Islam, and piracy in the Mediterranean, Daniel Vitkus, in “Turning Turk in *Othello*: The Conversion and Damnation of the Moor,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 48 (1997): 145–76, argues that Othello’s tragic fall is a conversion to stereotypically “Turkish” cruelty, violence, and irrationality.
4. While *Every Man Out*’s “*insula fortunata*” (Ind. 263) is never explicitly identified and the character names are mostly Italian, references to places like St. Giles’ Cripplegate (Ind. 72), the Inns of Court (1.2.61), and St. Paul’s Cathedral (3.5.33) clearly identify the fortunate island as England and the city as London.
5. Jonson, “Persons of the Play,” 13.
6. Vitkus, “Turning Turk in *Othello*,” 146.
7. The fear of losing oneself and turning Turk was bound up with the broader trope that excessive commerce with other lands and overvaluing of exotic fripperies would make the English into a race of mimics with no essential character of their own. Thomas Dekker writes in *The Seuen Deadly Sinnes of London* (1606), ed. H. F. B. Brett-Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1922):

An English-mans suit is like a traitor’s bodie that hath beene hanged, drawn, and quartered and set up in seuerall places: his Codpeece in *Denmark*, the collar of his Dublet and the belly in *France*; the wing and narrow sleeue in *Italy*; the short waste hangs over a Dutch Botchers stall in *Utrich*; his huge sloppes speakes *Spanish*; *Polonia* gives him the booties; the blocke for his head alters faster than the Feltmaker can fit him and thereupon we are called in scorn *Blockheades*. And thus we that mocke euerie Nation, for keeping one fashion, yet steale patches from euerie one of them, to peece out our pride, and now are laughing-stocks to them, because their cut so scruilly becomes us. (44)

The Englishman’s body has already been replaced by his wardrobe, by the modish “*Apishnesse*” (44), to use Dekker’s term, which drives

the Englishman to thoughtlessly botch himself together from the garments of other nations. This mimicry could become a paradoxical sort of self-fashioning: Dekker approvingly cites the artist for a book of national costumes who drew the Englishman “starke naked, with Sheeres in his hand, and cloth on his arme, because none could cut out his fashions but himself” (44).

8. In using the term “city comedy,” I am primarily drawing on Douglas Bruster’s redefinition of the term in *Drama and the Market in the Age of Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) to mean plays arising from “the collective focus of many dramatists on the essence of the physical world and its often demanding claims upon the foundations of urban existence” (38). Jean Howard, in *Theater of a City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), situates Jonson’s city comedies within the category of “London Comedy,” those plays set in London (or a thinly veiled stand-in) and dealing with “the arenas of life—gender and family life, commerce, encounters with foreignness—where change was most immediate and solutions least pre-scripted” (22).
9. I follow Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579–1624* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), in using *traffic* as a particularly fitting term for the range of bilateral Anglo-Islamic encounters produced by foreign trade (15). This word arose from Mediterranean commerce and potentially derived from the Latin sources like *tra/trans* (across) and *facere* (to do or make) or the Arabic *traffaqa* (to seek profit) and *tafriq*, signifying “distribution.” *Traffic* entered English in the sixteenth century to describe the transport of merchandise for the purposes of trade between distant or distinct communities. See Palmira Brummet, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery* (Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 1994), 175.
10. John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments of matters most speciall and memorable, happening in the Church, with an universall history of the same*, 2 vols. (London, 1596), 1.675. Thomas Heywood, *Londini Emporia, or London’s Mercatura* (London, 1633), sig. B3v.
11. In Ben Jonson’s *Every Man in His Humour* (1601 quarto), Stephano angrily calls the clever servant Musco a “Whoreson Scanderbag rogue” (1.2.21), citing Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour: A Parallel-Text Edition of the 1601 Quarto and the 1616 Folio*, ed. J. W. Lever (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971). Thomas Randolph’s *Hey for Honesty*, in Randolph, *The Poetical and Dramatic Works*, 2 vols., ed. W. Carew Hazlitt (London: B. Blom, 1968), features a character boasting that he will be “the Scanderbeg of the Company, the very Tamberlain of this ragged rout” (3.1), an example of how the names of both characters became associated with braggarts and pretensions to martial prowess. The hybridity and heroic self-fashioning

that Edmund Spenser celebrates in his dedication to *The History of George Castriot, Surnamed Scanderbeg, King of Albanie.... By Jacques de Lavardin, Lord of Plessis Bourrot, A Nobleman of France. Newly Translated out of French into English by Z. I. Gentleman* (London, 1596), and which Marlowe appropriates for Tamburlaine, are comically refigured as rootless cunning, dissimulation, pretense, and roguery. See Justin Kolb, “‘In Th’Armor of a Pagan Knight’: Romance and Anachronism East of England in Book V of *The Faerie Queene* and Tamburlaine,” *Early Theatre* 12.2 (2009), 194–207, for an analysis of the influence of the historical and literary figure of Scanderbeg on Spenser and Marlowe.

12. See Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist* (1.2.26), in Jonson, vol. 3 of *The Complete Plays*.
13. Philip Massinger, *The Renegado*, in *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England*, ed. Daniel Vitkus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).
14. See J. W. Lever, Introduction to Ben Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour: A Parallel-Text Edition*, xxiv–xxvi.
15. While rarely present in city comedy, Eastern characters and motifs were common enough in court and civic pageants for Linda McJannet to argue that they “constitute a third wave of iconography” in “Pirates, Merchants, and Kings: Oriental Motifs in English Court and Civic Entertainments,” in *The Mysterious and Foreign in Early Modern England*, eds. Helen Ostovich, Mary V. Silcox, and Graham Roebuck (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 249. This wave superseded the English folklore and biblical motifs of the Middle Ages and the classical themes of the Tudor era and provided the iconography for pageants, like *The Entertainment at Britain’s Burse*, that described disparate peoples as linked by a global trade network. See also Richmond Barbour, “Britain and the Great Beyond: *The Masque of Blackness* at Whitehall,” in *Playing the Globe: Genre and Geography in English Renaissance Drama*, eds. John Gillies and Virginia Mason Vaughan, 129–53, which reads Jonson’s masque as a bridge between popular and aristocratic conventions of impersonating Moors and nascent English imperialism.
16. Hugh Goughe, *The Offspring of the House of Ottomano, and Officers Pertaining to the Great Turkes Court* (London, 1569), sig. G3r.
17. *Ibid.*, G4r. The English phrase “I commit you unto God” is rendered as “Tsamarlodach tseni Alaha” in Turkish.
18. *Ibid.*, sig. G4v.
19. Burton, *Traffic and Turning*, 95.
20. In *Traffic and Turning*, Burton argues that Goughe refers to travel narratives in which the Islamic threat is “twofold, a combined assault on the male Christian body and soul” that threatens both religious faith and masculinity (98). The threat of conversion is bound up with

- threats of penetration, sexual assault, and castration. This argument is in line with Vitkus's argument that conversion to Islam "was considered a kind of sexual transgression or spiritual whoredom" (147), the transformation of a free man into another's thrall or punk.
21. A few such characters can be found in Jonson's court masques. *The Masque of Queens* in *Ben Jonson: The Complete Masques*, ed. Stephen Orgel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 122–41, includes a Persian queen, "Victorious Thomyris of Scythia" (line 377), as well as other classical queens from Egypt, Asia Minor, Palmyra, and Ethiopia. *The Masque of Blackness* (47–60), features the allegorical figure of "Niger in the form and color of an Ethiop" (line 39) and attended by "Negroes" (43), but any connection of this masque to Islamic themes is remote. Like most English writers addressing African topics in this era, Jonson drew upon "Pliny, Solinus, Ptolemy, and of late Leo the African" (13), referring to John Pory's 1600 translation of Leo Africanus's 1550 *Geographical Historie of Africa*. Bernadette Andrea, in "Assimilation or Dissimulation?: Leo Africanus's *Geographical Historie of Africa* and the Parable of Amphibia," *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 32.3 (2001): 7–29, reads Leo Africanus, a Moorish convert to Roman Catholicism, as an author function who exercises "literary, cultural, and political agency within the Islamic context of *taqiya*—defined as cultural dissimulation under the pressure of forced assimilation," and argues that "he represents the prototypical liminal subject on the cusp of Western European expansionism" (10). See also Bernadette Andrea, "The Ghost of Leo Africanus from the English to the Irish Renaissance," in *Postcolonial Moves: Medieval through Modern*, eds. Patricia Clare Ingham and Michelle R. Warren (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 195–215. Jonathan Burton has written on Leo Africanus, most recently in *Traffic and Turning* (233–56).
 22. Ben Jonson, *Volpone*, vol. 3 of *The Complete Plays*.
 23. For the text of this recently recovered piece, along with essential historical context and speculation on why Jonson never counted this entertainment for hire among his achievements, see James Knowles, "Jonson's *Entertainment at Britain's Burse*," in *Re-presenting Ben Jonson*, ed. Martin Butler (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 114–51.
 24. *Ibid.*, 114. See also David Riggs, *Ben Jonson: A Life* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989), 130. Jonson praised Cecil in an ironically naive epigram in 1605, asking, "What need hast thou of me, or my muse / Whose actions so themselves doe celebrate?" (2), portraying Cecil as a man of self-evident worth with little need for a poet's praise. Ben Jonson, "XLIII: To Robert, Earle of Salisbvrrie," vol. 8, *Ben Jonson*, eds. C. H. Hereford, Percy Simpson, and Evelyn Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947), 40.

25. Riggs, *Ben Jonson*, 157.
26. Knowles, "Jonson's *Entertainment at Britain's Burse*," 114.
27. Ibid., 115; L. C. Knights, *Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson* (1937, rpt. London: Chatto and Windus, 1962), 200.
28. Riggs, *Ben Jonson*, 157.
29. Lawrence Stone, "Inigo Jones and the New Exchange," *Archeological Journal* 114 (1957): 106–7.
30. Ibid., 115.
31. This shopboy is a cousin to the prompt boy who opens Jonson's 1632 play, *The Magnetic Lady*, vol. 4, *The Complete Plays*, by crying, "What do you lack gentlemen? What is't you lack? Any fine fancies, figures, humours, characters, ideas, definitions of lords and ladies? Waiting-women, parasites, knights, captains, courtiers, lawyers? What do you lack?" (Ind. 1–4).
32. Thomas Wilson to Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, March 31, 1609, Hatfield MSS 195/100, in *Historical Manuscripts Commission, Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Salisbury, Part 21 (1609–1612)*, (1970), 37.
33. Ibid., 37.
34. Knowles suggests that the show borrowed items from Sir Walter Cope's *Wunderkammer* ("Jonson's *Entertainment at Britain's Burse*," 116).
35. The sultan's dishes resemble the "yellow Purcelaine dishes" described by Ottavino Bon's "the Grand Signor's Serraglio," published in *Purchas His Pilgrimage*, vol. 2 (London, 1625), sigs. 7S2r. Although this account had not yet been published, Bon's service at the Ottoman court overlapped with that of the English ambassador, Sir Henry Lello, a regular correspondent of Cecil's. It is possible that this firsthand knowledge of the sultan's dishes reached Jonson via Cecil, on which see Knowles, "Jonson's *Entertainment at Britain's Burse*," 144n104.
36. The Sublime Porte was the ornate main gate to the divan, the residence of the Ottoman court in Istanbul. In Europe it came to serve as a synecdoche for the Turkish state.
37. This description of a mustache falling off due to "hot service in the low countries" evokes the effects of syphilis as well.
38. Mustaches were stereotypically associated with Turks, especially on stage, where actors playing Turkish parts sported extravagant false mustaches. Preparing his production of *Soliman and Perseda* in Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, Hieronimo asks Balthazar, who is to play the Sultan Suleiman, to "provide a Turkish cap, / A black mustachio, and a fauchion" (4.1.144–145) in *English Renaissance Drama*, ed. David Bevington *et al* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002), 3–74. See also Nathan Field's *A Woman Is a Weathercock* (1611), V.i., "*Abra*. And a huge mustachio? / *Neu*. A verie Turkes" (*Oxford English Dictionary* 3rd ed., 2003), s.v., "mustachio," 1c.

39. Knowles, "Jonson's *Entertainment at Britain's Burse*," 117.
40. Much as Face disguises himself as a Spaniard in "Hieronimo's old cloak, ruff, and hat" (Jonson, *The Alchemist*, 4.7.71).
41. *The Policie of the Turkish Empire* (London, 1597), 20–1.
42. Thomas Dekker, *If This Be Not A Good Play The Devil is In It* in vol. 3, *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. Fredson Bowers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 113–224.
43. Jack D'Amico, *The Moor in English Renaissance Drama* (Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1991), 132.
44. Thomas Dallam, "The Diary of Master Thomas Dallam, 1599–1600," in *Early Voyages and Travels in the Levant*, ed. J. Theodore Bent (London: Hakluyt Society, 1893), 54. Subsequent references are indicated parenthetically.
45. An experienced trader and diplomat, and English ambassador to the Porte from 1606 to 1611, Glover appears in several English travelers' accounts of journeys to Istanbul or the Levant, including William Lithgow's *The Totall Discourse of the Rare Adventures, and painefull Peregrinations of long nineteene Years Travayls, from Scotland to the most famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia, and Affrica* (London, 1632). Glover's role in prompting the comic panic of Dallam's party is an illustration of how firsthand accounts of the Islamic world could sow fear as much as understanding.

CHAPTER 11



“ORANGES AND LEMONS SAY THE BELLS OF ST. CLEMENT’S”: DOMESTICATING EASTERN COMMODITIES IN LONDON COMEDIES

Linda McJannet

Recent studies of early modern trade with the East have highlighted English anxiety about the dangers posed by contact with foreigners, especially non-Christians, and by the consumption of “heathen” goods. In *Sick Economies*, Jonathan Gil Harris focuses on mercantilist treatises that use metaphors of disease and contagion to describe “foreign” commodities, even as they promote a “global” market as natural and necessary to England’s economic health.¹ Kristen G. Brookes analyzes anti-tobacco tracts in her essay “Inhaling the Alien,” and Gitanjali Shahani traces the reception of Indian cottons, such as cambrics and calico, in “‘A Foreigner by Birth’: The Life of Indian Cloth in the Early Modern English Marketplace.”² Indian fabrics were so popular in the early 1600s that at the end of the century the weavers blamed them for the decline of the domestic wool industry. Partly as a result of the “calico wars,” the English Parliament passed a law in 1721 “prohibiting the domestic consumption of every kind of pure cotton textile.”³ Coffee and tea were greeted with similar ambivalence, embraced by consumers but criticized by the often self-appointed arbiters of morals and the national interest.⁴ However, opposition voiced by interested groups such as the weavers did not

dampen consumers' desire for these products, and the laws prohibiting their use did not necessarily reduce their consumption.⁵

My title features a familiar rhyme about a London church near the wharf where cargoes of citrus were unloaded. That these English bells are imagined as reminding Londoners of—and perhaps even promoting—the Mediterranean trade in oranges and lemons captures the essential phenomenon that interests me, namely the integration of Eastern commodities in the everyday life of the city. In this essay, however, I focus not on citrus but on the archetypal imports from Islamic lands, namely silk and fine spices.⁶ In the opening scene of *The Merchant of Venice*, Salerio speculates that Antonio is sad because he worries that rocks might wreck his argosy, “scatter all her spices on the stream,” and “[e]nrobe the roaring waters with [her] silks” (1.1.31–3). To Salerio, and to the European imagination in general, I would argue, silks and spices are the archetypal products of the East.⁷

Initially, spices made up the bulk of European trade with Islamic lands.⁸ These included pepper from Mughal India; cinnamon from Ceylon; and cloves, mace, and nutmeg, which prior to modern times were available uniquely from the Moluccas or Spice Islands.⁹ (For contemporary drawings of two major spice plants, see figs. 11.1 and 11.2).

For millennia, fine spices had made their way from East to West through complex networks of Asian and European traders covering half the circumference of the world. Jack Turner reports that the first “consumer of pepper on whom we can hang a name” was Ramses II, who was buried in 1224 BCE with peppercorns in his nostrils.¹⁰ Of all the imports from the East, spices were the most profitable; they weighed little and initially sold for prodigious sums.¹¹ When European traders (the Portuguese, the English, and ultimately the Dutch) began to use the direct sea route to India and the Moluccas (traveling around the southern tip of Africa), the cost of spices in Europe fell, because of lower transportation costs and the elimination (usually by force of arms) of Asian and Mediterranean middlemen.¹² The direct sea route was initially a threat to the English merchants involved in the Levant trade, but they adjusted by buying the cheaper spices imported by the Portuguese and the Dutch and reexporting them to the Levant. Thus, the English became re-exporters as well as consumers of Asian spices.¹³

In the late sixteenth century, silk overtook spice as the leading Eastern import, growing more than tenfold between 1560 and 1621.¹⁴ During roughly the same period, the number of mercers

1 *Piper nigrum.*
Blacke Pepper.

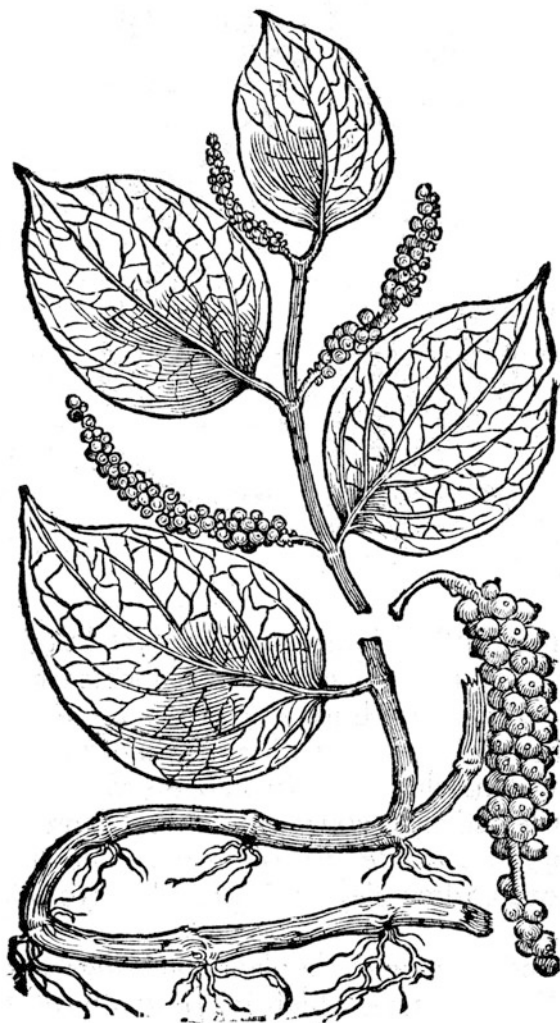


Figure 11.1 "*Piper nigrum*, Blacke Pepper" from John Gerard, *The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plantes*, 2nd ed. (London, 1633), p. 1538. STC 11751 [F], Houghton Library, Harvard University

1 *Zinziberis verior* Icon.
The true figure of Ginger.

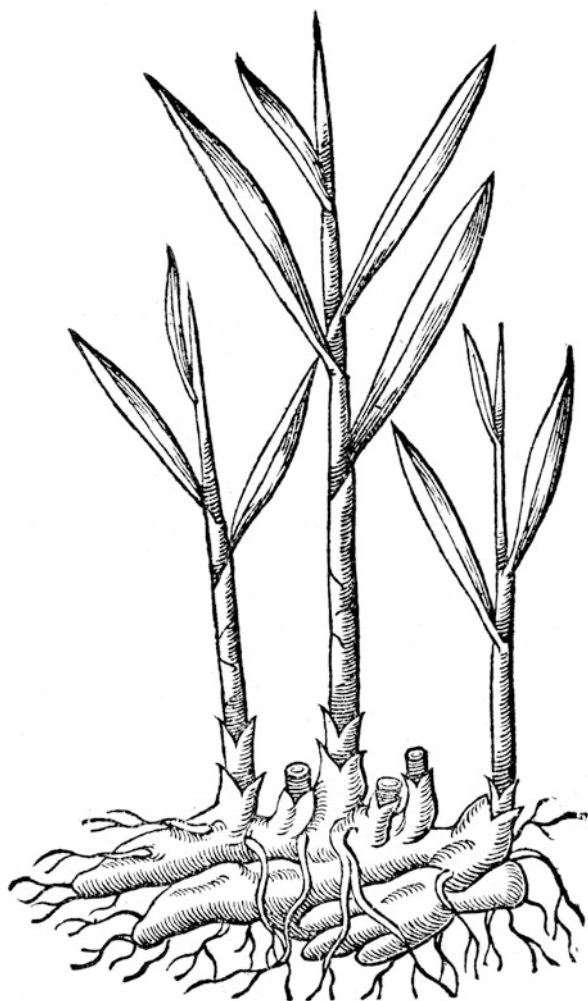


Figure 11.2 “*Zinziberis verior* Icon, The true figure of Ginger,” from John Gerard, *The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plantes*, 2nd ed. (London, 1633), p. 61. STC 11751 [F], Houghton Library, Harvard University

(silk merchants) in London rose from 30 to 300, and the number of foreign tailors, skilled in working with “foreign” fabrics, likewise grew.¹⁵ While silk weaving and spinning had been established in Europe (in Lucca, Genoa, Venice, and Lyon) during the Crusades, European weavers were dependent upon raw silk from the East. In addition, as Lisa Jardine points out, European silk weavers emulated their Eastern counterparts, basing both their “techniques and their designs on Ottoman prototypes.”¹⁶ Silk came initially from China via the Silk Road and the Mediterranean, and later from territories around the Caspian Sea under Ottoman and Safavid control. According to Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, of the 200,000 to 259,000 kilograms of silk imported each year into Europe during early modern times, 86 percent came from Persia.¹⁷ Europeans paid for the silk with silver bullion (eventually from the New World), their own fabrics being in little demand in the East; the much-coveted bullion was the major reason the shahs and sultans repeatedly fought to control the silk-producing regions.¹⁸ Although velvet and taffetas woven in Europe were popular, finished silk from Persia and China had lasting allure—for its beauty, workmanship, and durability.¹⁹ Discussing a well-known portrait of adventurer Sir Robert Shirley in Persian dress, Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass point out that, contrary to the orientalist assumptions of later times, “for Sherley the journey to Persia was a journey towards ‘higher’ forms of technology and civilization—toward fabrics and dyes and embroideries that surpassed anything he had seen in Europe.”²⁰

In focusing on silk and fine spice, I am investigating not the reception of goods that were *new* to seventeenth-century London (like tobacco and calicoes) but the new *availability* of imports that had previously been restricted to the aristocracy by law or by costliness. In 1603, the sumptuary laws were relaxed, which made the wearing of silks and luxury textiles by people of lower rank more socially acceptable.²¹ The central aisle of St. Paul’s Cathedral became known as “the Mediterraneo” because it was a gathering place where imports, especially silk and fine clothing, were conspicuously displayed and discussed. The old Royal Exchange, built in 1568 as an emporium for luxury goods and a meeting place for the merchants and investors involved in global trade, was joined by the “China houses” and the New Exchange (built in 1609), both of which specialized in fabrics and porcelains from the East.²² As luxury goods became more affordable during the seventeenth century, in addition to buying silk stockings and damask suits, “almost everybody seemed to be consuming larger amounts of fine spices...[and] new medicinal imports.”²³

In this essay I discuss references to silk and spices in "London comedies," plays set in London that feature non-noble characters, create comedy from "the stuff of urban life," and negotiate the presence of "non-native Londoners [including country-folk] and non-native commodities within the space of the city."²⁴ I examine six plays by five authors closely associated with the genre: Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (c.1599); John Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605); Francis Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (c.1607); Dekker and Thomas Middleton, *The Roaring Girl* (c.1611); and Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist* (1610) and *Bartholomew Fair* (1614). Instances in which silks or spices appear as costumes or props are relatively easy to identify, but verbal references, literal and figurative, require special attention, since many are not obvious to a modern reader. Whether satirized or celebrated, I would argue, the representation of Londoners' use of and attitudes toward these goods in plays is at least as illuminating as their depiction in treatises advocating or lamenting their consumption. The dramatists can claim a greater degree of objectivity about imported textiles than can the weavers. Lea Knudsen Allen has argued that while "exotic" goods gained cultural value by traversing many national boundaries, they simultaneously "became central to imagining London as a metropolitan city"; they "became markers of the city's own [cultural and economic] capital."²⁵ While Allen focuses on luxury imports in the aggregate, I propose to examine how two specific goods are depicted in these London plays. Overall, my analysis suggests that, although silks and spices had been prized because of their distant origins, they were increasingly woven into the fabric of urban life. Whereas the aristocrat's satin or velvet formerly set him or her apart, it might now be the badge of bourgeois achievement or membership in a London company. While silks could still be controversial, especially as appropriated by the lower ranks, spices appear to have been thoroughly domesticated. Indeed, particular spiced foods are identified with—are even emblematic of—particular London neighborhoods.

"SILK AND SATIN, YOU MAD PHILISTINES, . . . SILK AND SATIN!"

Props and costumes made of silk are common in London comedies. Like calicoes from Calicut (on the Malabar Coast of India), the names of silken fabrics recall their origins in Islamic lands: damasks from Damascus; "sarcenet," a diminutive of *sarzen* (Saracen); and "taffeta," from the Persian word *tāftah*.²⁶ As one might expect, silks

connote luxury, high status, and the good life, but in these plays they are associated with the gentry, craftsmen, and the middle class rather than with aristocrats. As the rascal Cocledemoy explains to Mary Faugh, the bawd in *The Dutch Courtesan*, the status of tradesmen is determined by who “sells the best commodities”: “the draper is more worshipful than the pointmaker, the silkman more worshipful than the draper, and the goldsmith more honorable than both.”²⁷ The silkman (or mercer) commands more respect than the draper because silk is more “worshipful” than linen or wool. Cocledemoy’s argument in this scene is ironic; he pretends to flatter Mary Faugh, saying, “The bawd[’s] above all . . . , for where [the draper, mercer, and goldsmith] sell but cloth, satins, and jewels, she sells divine virtues, as virginity, modesty, and such rare gems” (1.2.35–8). Nonetheless, his assertion that the honor of tradesmen depends upon the honor of their wares seems matter-of-fact, not part of his social critique. In a later speech, Cocledemoy concedes that cheaper fabrics, such as grogram (or grogaran, a blend of cheap silk and wool or mohair), might be the badge of simple virtue. He asserts that he would feel guilty if he were “to bite an honest gentleman, a poor grogaran poet or a penurious parson,” but he feels no remorse for tormenting Mulligrub, the dishonest vintner (3.2.34–5). Mistress Mulligrub, however, challenges the assumption that the hierarchy of fabrics corresponds to a hierarchy of wit, virtue, or economic success: she points out that “though my husband be a citizen, and’s cap’s made of wool [as opposed to the silk or velvet caps of the gentry to be discussed shortly], yet I ha’ wit and see my good as soon as another” (3.3.24–6). She boasts that she runs tabs for “squires, gentlemen, and knights . . . ; and [that] full many fine men go upon my score, as simple as I stand here” (3.3.19–21). In her view, the intellectual, social, and economic inferiority signaled by her husband’s homely woolen cap is belied by her gentlemen customers’ indebtedness to her—though whether such debts (especially if not repaid) are really to her “good” remains an open question.

Sometimes silks and satins represent a characters’ socially sanctioned achievement of higher status. Even so strict a critic as the Puritan Phillip Stubbes acknowledged that “priuat people” have the right to wear “silkes, velvets, satens, damasks, and what they list” *if* they are duly charged “with some kind of office in the common wealth”; under these circumstances, their finery serves to “dignif[y] and innobl[e] the [state].”²⁸ In *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, however, we see the adoption of fine clothes might also facilitate financial success that in turn led to the right to wear them. Before he is elevated to the rank of sheriff or alderman, the master shoemaker, Simon Eyre, orders

a ceremonial gown, apparently to enhance his status as he negotiates the purchase of the Dutch skipper's cargo. He receives his finery with unabashed delight:

Enter BOY with a velvet coat and an alderman's gown.

...I have sent for a guarded [braided] gown and a damask cassock.
See where it comes—look here, Madgy!...Silk and satin, you mad
Philistines, silk and satin!²⁹

When Firk responds to the glorious sight by feeling the fabric, Eyre demonstrates that he is familiar with the fabric and the technical terms associated with it: "Softly, Firk, for rearing of the nap" (7.111). Far from questioning Eyre's right to wear such apparel, Hodge affirms it: "Why, now you look like yourself, master!" (7.114). Even his social superiors, Sir Roger Oatley and his friend, on hearing of Eyre's profits from the resale of the goods, congratulate themselves on having been "partners" with him, and greet him warmly as "Master Eyre" (9.63–73). When Eyre becomes the sheriff of London, his new status and his wife's are signaled by silk and velvet apparel, as well as his "gold chain" of office (10.134 sd). He tells Margery, "I shall make thee a lady; here's a French hood for thee" (10.139–40; a "French hood" included a velvet covering for the hair). Finally, having risen to the rank of lord mayor and received his scarlet gown, Eyre contemplates his new life and duties: "It's...a fine life, a velvet life, a careful life" (17. 37–8).³⁰ Eyre earns the right to wear silks and satins partly through shrewd business practices. However, because he shares his good fortune with his fellow shoemakers and uses his newfound status and credit with the king to procure a happy ending for the lovers, his actions are celebrated not condemned. Eyre also reminds us that even the rank and file of the Cordwainers' (or Shoemakers') Company wore silk at official or festive gatherings. As he prepares to host the king at his Shrove Tuesday feast, Eyre declares that "none but the livery of my company shall in their satin hoods wait upon the trencher of my sovereign" (20.4–6). The once-foreign or aristocratic satin is now the badge of one's identity as a shoemaker and a loyal English subject.

Elsewhere in the play, however, references to silk highlight socio-economic distinctions that the speaker feels cannot or should not be elided. In the opening scene, Sir Roger Oatley (apparently named for a grocer who became lord mayor of London in 1434)³¹ participates in a verbal sparring match with the Earl of Lincoln about the mutual attraction between Lincoln's nephew Roland Lacy and Oatley's

daughter Rose. When Oatley protests that he “mislikes” Rose’s “boldness in the chase” (1.8), Lincoln pretends to be offended and asks if Oatley thinks “it then a shame / To join a Lacy to an Oatley’s name?” (1.9–10). Oatley parries by alluding with pseudo-humility to the notorious extravagance of courtiers:

Too mean is my poor girl for his high birth.
 Poor citizens must not with courtiers wed,
 Who will in silks and gay apparel spend
 More in one year that I am worth by far. (1.11–15)

Though he apparently condones Eyre’s expenditures on silk to further his commercial dealings, he faults the prodigality of aristocrats who wear silks to flaunt their status and wealth. Lincoln seizes upon this, stressing Lacy’s “unthrift” and “rioting” (lines 17, 35), but Oatley’s later asides make clear that class pride is the issue for him as well as for Lincoln. His reference to wasteful spending on silks is a rhetorical tactic, not a simple expression of bourgeois thrift or class deference.³²

In *Bartholomew Fair*, the velvet caps and hoods adopted by the bourgeoisie are prominently featured. Both Mistress Littlewit and Mistress Overdo (the wife of Justice Overdo) are identified with their velvet headgear. In the opening scene, Mistress Littlewit appears (apparently at her husband’s urging) in a velvet cap.³³ The cap sends Littlewit into paroxysms of delight: “Ay, marry, Win! Now you look finely indeed, Win! This cap does convince! . . . Sweet Win, let me kiss it!” (1.1.19–24). Win doesn’t share her husband’s enthusiasm (“Indeed, la, you are such a fool, still!” [1.1.27]). Nothing daunted, Littlewit encourages his friend Winwife to admire it, too. Winwife responds with a comic blazon, praising her “strawberry breath, cherry lips, apricot cheeks, and a soft velvet head, like a melicotton” (1.2.14–15; a melicotton is a peach grafted onto a quince). Though comparing the texture of velvet to peach fuzz would seem at best a backhanded compliment, Littlewit is thrilled and regrets he had not thought of the conceit himself. Although moralists typically blamed women’s love of luxury for emptying the national coffers, silken apparel is not associated only with the women of the house. We know from the Induction that Littlewit is wearing “black silk stockings” (whose mending has delayed the start of the performance, Ind. 3–4). In addition, when the Littlewit party sets off for the fair, several of them seem to be sporting silken headgear: at the fair, Knockem invites them into the pigwoman’s booth to protect their “fine velvet caps” from the dust (3.2.54).

As one might expect, lower-class characters are sometimes hostile to the finery of their "betters." Rafe, the grocer's apprentice who is tapped to perform the hero's role in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, has a grand death speech. He bids farewell to the joys he shared with his fellow prentices on Shrove Tuesday, which include "daub[ing] a satin gown with rotten eggs."³⁴ Whether the satin gowns belonged to aristocrats who happened to be in the path of the rampaging apprentices or to well-dressed whores and their socially ambitious customers is not specified, but the antagonism to satin is clear. Similarly, Wasp, an irritable servant, insults Littlewit's wife for her slowness performing a task: "A 'turd i' your wife's teeth . . . for all her velvet custard on her head, sir" (1.4.52–5). Mistress Overdo's silk gown and velvet hood (and her assumption that her status as the "Mistress Justice" must command respect) likewise inspire the hostility of her social inferiors.³⁵ When Wasp is arrested by the watch, he rejects her sympathy: "Am I come to be pitied by your tuft taffeta now?" (4.4.145–6).³⁶ He reminds her that he knew her husband, Justice Overdo, when he was a mere two-penny scrivener, "as high as he bears his head now, or you your hood, dame" (4.4.146–8). Unlike Eyre's rise to silks and satins, the Overdos' rise is viewed by Wasp as unmerited, and their finery is therefore undeserved and presumptuous. Other denizens of Bartholomew Fair simultaneously mock and flatter Mistress Overdo by equating her with her fancy clothes; they call her the "woman o' shilk," the "velvet woman," and "a guest of velvet" (4.4.179, 183, 192–3, 196). As they try to persuade her into becoming one of Ursula's whores, they claim that she will "live like a lady," with "tires, . . . green gowns, and . . . velvet petticoats" (4.5.36–7).³⁷ In effect, they invert the social significance of velvet, identifying it as both the instrument and the reward of vice. Edgeworth, the bawd's confederate, likewise equates whores and silk when he tempts potential customers to "take part of a silken gown, a velvet petticoat, or a wrought smock" (4.6.17–19). The implication that such clothing awaits the successful whore is belied, however, when Punk Alice complains that Mistress Overdo's clothes give her, an upstart amateur, an unfair advantage over the professionals. As a result, Alice attacks the justice's wife, or more precisely, attacks her clothing. She pulls Mistress Overdo's "hood over her ears, and her hair through it," exclaiming that her rival's "tuft taffeta haunches" and her "caps and hoods of velvet, call away our customers and lick the fat from us" (4.5.65–70). In *Bartholomew Fair*, as if to restore social equity, several pretenders to high status (including Mistress Overdo, Cokes, and Wasp) are stripped of their finery during the course of the play.

The value of silk as an indicator of superior social or personal qualities is also called into question by more respectable characters. In *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, Oately asks Eyre and Margery to counsel Rose against a match above her station. Eyre, remembering (or forgetting?) his own premature appropriation of an alderman's gown, exclaims, "A courtier?—wash, go by! . . . Those silken fellows are but painted images—outsides, outsides, Rose; their inner linings are torn" (11.39–42). Hodge also points to the superficiality of fabrics as tokens of class. In the interrupted wedding scene, he exults that Oately and Lincoln have been fooled by fine clothing and masks, so that Jane, a poor shoemaker's wife, is mistaken "for Mistress Damask Rose" (sc. 18.120–1). Apparently class distinctions are not even skin-deep; clothes make the gentleman—and the lady. At the same time, when Jane reunites with her husband in his "humble weeds" and offers to give up the wedding dress her suitor gave her, Hodge insists that she keep it: "Not a rag, Jane. The law's on our side. He that sows in another man's ground forfeits his harvest" (18.58–64). Having proven her nonmercenary character, she can benefit from her property rights with a clear conscience. Conversely, wearing silk does not itself guarantee inner—or even outer—merit. Mistress Openwork in *The Roaring Girl* is initially impressed by the would-be gallant Goshawk and his fancy clothing, but the action of the play leads her to exclaim, "Why, have not many handsome legs in silk stockings villainous splay feet for all their great roses [i.e., the knots of silk ribbons on their shoes]?"³⁸ Similarly, in *The Dutch Courtesan*, Crispinella, a tart-tongued maiden, complains that "any fellow that has but one nose to his face, and a standing collar and skirts also lin'd with taffety sarcenet, must salute us on the lips as familiarly—Soft skins save us!" (3.1.12–15). Men, undistinguished or unattractive in themselves, believe that their "taffety sarcenet" entitles them to take liberties with women. Even more telling, the experienced cutpurses in *The Roaring Girl* know that silken clothes often go with empty purses: the former causes the latter.³⁹ They size up their potential victims: "'Tis a question whether there be any silver shells [money] amongst them, for all their satin outsides" (5.2.258–9).

In a few cases, the social meaning of silks seems less important than their exchange value. In *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, the foolish Humphrey offers Luce a pair of gloves "whipped about with silk" (1.149), apparently believing that even so slight a touch of the fiber might win a woman's heart, and he boasts that they cost him "three and two pence, or no money" (1.152–3). In *The Alchemist*, Drugger, the naïve tobacconist, is instructed to compensate the con

man Subtle by bringing “a new damask suit” (2.6.72). It may be that even the tricksters want to keep their silks: Face’s last gesture of comradeship (if it can be called that) is to offer Doll a “sheet to save [her] velvet gown” as she escapes “over the wall” (5.4.134), but it is also possible they valued them as a source of cash in hard times.⁴⁰ Overall, however, the characters in the plays want to possess luxury fabrics for their physical qualities and their value as status symbols, rather than treating them merely as commodities to be exchanged.

While the lower-class characters criticize some for their airs and finery, they also defend their right to wear silk. In *Bartholomew Fair*, Captain Whit, a bawd, calls on the hobbyhorse maker, but Leatherhead asserts that he is busy. Whit (in a drunken, stage-Irish accent) accuses Leatherhead of snubbing him because he is dressed up in a “wrought neet-cap and [a] phelvet sherkin [velvet jerkin]” (3.1.36–7).⁴¹ Whit reminds Leatherhead that he has seen him in his “leather jerkin ere now . . . as bushy and as stately as [he] sheem’st to be” in his napped velvet outfit (3.1.36–9). The gingerbread woman comes to Leatherhead’s defense: “Why, and what an’ you have, Captain Whit? He has his choice of jerkins, you may see by that, and his caps, too, I assure you” (3.1.40–2). Although they mock the gentry for their presumptuous velvets, members of the lower classes lay their own democratic claim to “choice” in matters of dress.

Two metaphorical references suggest the degree to which English consumers had integrated silk into their imaginations as well as their wardrobes. In the opening scene of *The Alchemist*, the “venture tripartite” is having problems even before its first customer arrives. In their argument over whose skills and wit are more important to their scam, Subtle threatens his co-conspirator Face (currently dressed as a captain) with a vial filled with a chemical preparation. He warns Face to keep his distance: “I’ll gum your silks / With good strong water and you come. / . . . / . . . I shall mar / All that the tailor has made, if you approach” (1.1.6–10). Elizabeth Cook’s note glosses “gum” as “stiffen,” and cheaper fabrics were sometimes gummed to stiffen them. However, fine silk was painstakingly “degummed” by being soaked in an oil or soap emulsion; gummy “raw” silk is heavier and less valuable than the finished fabric. Thus, in addition to mocking Face’s fine outfit as a false front (“All that the tailor has made”), Subtle’s threat to mar the silk by (re-)gumming it indicates an understanding of silk-making and the hierarchy of silk fabrics. Clearly, Jonson assumes that at least some in the audience will get the joke. Littlewit’s opening soliloquy in *Bartholomew*

Fair also indicates ordinary consumers' knowledge of sericulture. He is congratulating himself on a fine "conceit"—namely, the coincidence that Bartholomew Cokes is taking out his wedding license on St. Bartholomew's Day: "I ha' such luck to spin out these fine things still, and like a silkworm, out of myself" (1.1.1–3). The silkworm's filament is known for its length—an average of 600 to 1,000 yards per cocoon, depending on which authority one consults. This is the reason silk thread is so strong: it is composed not of short fibers twisted together like cotton or wool or flax, but rather of several long filaments, each of which is unbroken. Littlewit's imagining himself as a silkworm producing an endless stream of "pretty conceits" suggests that he and Jonson know something about silk: in other words, it has moved from being a foreign and mysterious commodity to a familiar and understood—though still highly desirable—one.

"NUTMEGS AND GINGER, CINNAMON AND CLOVES"

Although spices had aphrodisiacal, mortuary, and religious uses, in the plays I am discussing they are chiefly associated with food and drink. As physical props, spices or spiced products make only a few appearances. In *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, the grocer's wife offers the cudgelled Rafe some "green ginger" as a restorative (2.255–7).⁴² Dapper, one of the con men's victims in *The Alchemist*, is at one point silenced with a gingerbread "gag" and thrust into a privy (or outhouse). He later explains that he ate the gingerbread (contrary to his orders) "to stay his stomach" when the fumes threatened to "overcome" him (5.4.5–6). These props thus highlight the medicinal value of certain spices. Joan's gingerbread, a treat rather than a restorative, features prominently in the action of *Bartholomew Fair*.⁴³ Since her gingerbread was shaped into the figure of St. Bartholomew, whose feast day the fair commemorated, the Puritan preacher, Zeal-of-the-Land Busy, attacks the cakes as a "basket of popery, [a] nest of images: and [a] whole legend of ginger-work," a "legend" being a collection of saints' lives (3.6. 69–71). Unlike Rafe's and the apprentices' animosity toward satin gowns, however, Busy is offended by the religious associations of the gingerbread's shape, not by the foreignness or social connotations of the spice itself; any comestible shaped like a saint would have felt his ire. Moreover, when he pulls down poor Joan's stall and scatters her wares all over the stage, he is seen as a lunatic and a religious fanatic, not a patriotic defender of English foodstuffs and Englishness (3.6.82–103).

These few (though important) instances of stage properties aside, spices and spicy commodities are more often alluded to than physically present. In *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, Old Merrythought enters singing:

*Nose, nose, jolly red nose,
And who gave thee this jolly red nose?*
.....
*Nutmegs and ginger, cinnamon and cloves,
And they gave me this jolly red nose.* (1.345–51)

Merrythought's "red nose" is probably the consequence of too much spiced wine or ale. To prevent or mask spoilage, spices were typically added to these beverages, a practice that survives in holiday mulled wine; beer did not need to be spiced, since hops are a natural preservative.⁴⁴ In his optimistic mania, however, Merrythought appears to celebrate rather than regret his overindulgence. In *Twelfth Night*, Sir Toby's famous challenge to Malvolio about "cakes and ale" is followed by Feste's parallel remark, "And ginger shall be hot i' th' mouth, too" (2.3.16–17), suggesting that ginger-spiced ale was part of their recipe for the good life. The cargo of the Dutch ship that Eyre buys and resells in *The Shoemaker's Holiday* includes spices as well as other Eastern delicacies. Whereas the previous allusions point to the use-value of spices, the Dutchman's spices are purchased for resale. As noted earlier, Eyre's profit (given in the play somewhat hyperbolically as "two or three hundred thousand pounds" [7.13–14]) underwrites his rise in society and his ability to purchase silks and satins for himself and Margery. No wonder Firk urges Eyre to snap up the cargo, exclaiming, "Let not a man buy a nutmeg but yourself!" (7.136). In *The Alchemist*, Face likewise promises Kastril that if he can master the arts of sharp dealing, he will be able to get rich by intercepting others' "commodit[ies]" "be it pepper, soap, / Hops, or tobacco..." (3.4.95–9).

Other references to spices and Eastern medicinals suggest that, though once costly, they were now being used by ordinary citizens. Rafe, the would-be knight, scorns to stay in the grocer's shop "selling mithradatum and dragon's water" (1.249–50; mithradatum is an herbal remedy named for Mithradates, one of two kings of Parthia in ancient Persia). He is annoyed when preparations for his quest are interrupted by a customer looking for "a halfpenny-worth of pepper" (1.294–5). In his final speech, as if to suggest that his heroic quest has come full circle, Rafe reports that Death came into his shop to

bargain for aqua vitae, but that before Rafe could take the bottle down, “Death caught a pound of pepper in his hand / And sprinkled all [Rafe’s] face and body o’er” (5.307–13). Pepper can be used as a weapon or a distraction, as we see in modern pepper spray,⁴⁵ but in the play it seems rather a ploy to entice Rafe to “cool himself” (after being pelted with the “hot” spice) by walking in Moorfields, where Death mortally wounds him with a “forked arrow through his head” (5. 316, 318). The reference to pepper may also be a foreshadowing of Rafe’s death (in the play-within-the play), since spices were used to anoint and embalm the dead (as in the case of Ramses II).

Indeed, some spices and spiced foods were so familiar that they had apparently lost their “exotic” cachet. Gingerbread seems a case in point. In *Bartholomew Fair*, when Mistress Littlewit wonders what business made Wasp so impatient, Quarlous replies, “More than buying of gingerbread i’ the Cloister here!” (1.4.35). When Joan calls out to them to try her spicy wares, Winwife snootily exclaims, “Do we look as if we would buy gingerbread? Or hobbyhorses? (2.5.11–13). To his credit, however, Quarlous defends the vendors: “Why, . . . they know no better ware than they have, nor better customers than come. And our very being here makes us fit to be demanded, as well as others” (2.5.14–16). The low status of gingerbread in this context is further suggested by the name of its vendor, Joan Trash. Only Bartholomew Cokes (his last name means “fool”) admits to being enamored of gingerbread. He imagines gracing his wedding with a “banquet of gingerbread” and with “wedding gloves [of] gingerbread” that will enable the “guests [to] eat their fingers’ ends” (3.4.154–5). Of course, there’s gingerbread and gingerbread. Joan protests that hers contains “nothing but what’s wholesome” (2.2.8), but Leatherhead accuses her of using “stale bread, rotten eggs, musty ginger, and dead honey” (2.2.9–10). So it may be that only the inferior bread at the fair is déclassé. Moreover, despite their pretense of superiority, the gentry have spent the entire day enjoying Ursula’s greasy roast pig, sweets, monsters, hobbyhorses, the antics of other patrons, and all the guilty pleasures of the fair; so their dismissal of gingerbread may likewise be hypocritical.

If actual spices seem fully integrated into the life of London, both on a large and a “halfpenny” scale, the metaphors used by the characters in these plays suggest their imaginative appropriation of spice as well. In *The Roaring Girl*, Mistress Openwork, complaining of her husband’s alleged infidelity, laments that she was a gentleman’s daughter and had “a spice of the French” (2.1.135). Her metaphor suggests simultaneously the piquancy of learning a foreign language

and her small degree of mastery (just a pinch). In the same play, Sir Davy Dapper, who has involved the sergeants in a scheme to reform his son Jack, urges them to be severe when they arrest him. "Take no bail," he tells them, "put mace enough into his caudle" (3.3.164). "Caudle" was a dish composed of gruel and "spiced ale" that often contained mace. In Sir Davy's mind, Moluccan mace merges with English maces as a means to curb a wayward son. In *The Roaring Girl*, Mistress Gallipot, the apothecary's wife, pretending to be angry with her husband, asserts that she is "none of [his] drugs," to which he responds suggestively (or threateningly) with a mortar-and-pestle metaphor: "Thou art a sweet drug, sweetest Pru, and the more thou art pounded, the more precious" (2.3.14–17). In another witty usage, Quarlous explains that the Puritan Busy gave up his trade as a baker "out of a scruple he took, that (in spic'd conscience) those cakes he made were serv'd to bridals, maypoles, morrises, and such profane feasts" (1.2.120–3): that is, the pastries were tainted by their consumption at these traditional English pastimes. In Busy's view, the "ungodly" domestic practices—not the foreign ingredient—are the problem. In Quarlous's metaphor, Busy's conscience is too fine by half, and hence "spic'd," or excessively scrupulous. Alternatively, Quarlous may associate Busy's quickness to condemn with a "hot" temper and therefore with spices.

As a final example of the integration of spice into London's urban culture, certain spiced foods seem to have been emblematic of specific London neighborhoods and institutions. As we have already seen, gingerbread was the hallmark of Bartholomew Fair. Near the end of *The Roaring Girl*, Sir Davy invites Lord Noland, the only aristocrat in the play, to join their "boon voyage" to Pimlico, "that nappy [heady] land of spice-cakes" (5.1.53–4). According to Edward Sugden, Pimlico, a neighborhood north of London, was frequented "for its fresh air and the cakes and ale [both of them probably spiced] for which it was famous."⁴⁶ In *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, spice is associated with a fictional version of Bartholomew Fair. Rafe gives the Cracovian Princess three pence to "buy . . . pins at Bumbo Fair" (4.119; bumbo is a drink made from rum, water, and nutmeg).⁴⁷ Finally, near the end of *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, Eyre rejects his wife's advice on how to speak to the king, dismissing her with: "Away, you Islington whitepot!" (20.49). "Islington whitepot" is a spiced custard: "a dish of milk or cream boiled with eggs, flour and spices, apparently a favourite with Londoners on local excursions."⁴⁸

While these plays' references to silk acknowledge their sometimes ruinous cost and the unreliability of their value as markers of class and

virtue, spices and the trade on which they depend are not portrayed as problematic. Writing in 1726, Voltaire asserted that “after 1500 there was no pepper to be had at Calicut that was not dyed red with blood,”⁴⁹ but awareness of the human cost of Western Europeans’ violent takeover of the spice trade during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is absent from these plays. One Portuguese account was published in English prior to the composition of the plays under discussion: namely, *History of the Discovery and Conquest of India by the Portuguese*, Nicholas Litchfield’s 1582 translation of Fernão Lopes Castaheda’s work. Other translations appeared in 1660 and after, but since these, like Litchfield’s, focused on Portuguese atrocities (as described and justified by the Portuguese themselves), the English translators took the opportunity to contrast Portugal’s violent acts with the “peaceable and quiet commerce” pursued by the English East India Company.⁵⁰ The infamous Amboyna massacre of 1623, during which ten Englishmen associated with East India Company were beheaded by their Dutch competitors, happened almost a decade after the composition of the plays under consideration here; this event likewise depicted England’s rivals in the spice trade as the source of the violence.⁵¹ So English consumers and theatergoers of 1600 to 1614, even those familiar with Litchfield’s history, might not have felt any moral qualms about consuming spices. The point I wish to stress, however, is that, as Turner points out, only with the rise of fully developed orientalist discourses in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries did spices become “the mark of the decadent, incompatible Other.”⁵² In the early modern period, as these plays attest, they were identified with home cooking.

On the evidence of this group of plays, then, imports from Islamic lands were surprisingly integrated into the social, commercial, and imaginative life of Londoners. The sheer number of references to silks and spices is in itself significant. The characters’ (and real-life Londoners’) fondness for, even obsession with, these commodities should not, I would argue, be dismissed as “fetishism.” While silks and spices are imbued with social significance (of various kinds), they are also valued for their intrinsic properties, both pleasant and useful. Pepper may not be as vital as salt to the human palate, but it would be sad to contemplate ham without cloves, eggnog without nutmeg, hot-cross buns without cinnamon, and anything savory without pepper. Although silk is known for its practical qualities (warmth, strength, and dye-taking), costly brocades, velvets, and damasks are hard to defend on grounds of utility (as King Lear points out in his “O reason not the need!” speech). Certainly many a courtier or ambitious

gentleman's son went recklessly into debt in order to purchase them. On the other hand, it's not out of false consciousness that art museums today exhibit Chinese, Japanese, Persian, and Ottoman textiles. Moreover, as Jones and Stallybrass argue, the charge of fetishism rests on the fallacy that there was ever a time before "the fall into materialism" or a society in which people were "spiritually pure, uncontaminated by the objects around them."⁵³

Rather, these characters' interactions with silks and spices seem to me to be an example of what Stephen Greenblatt calls "cultural mobility." Greenblatt and his co-authors focus on the circulation of ideas and practices, rather than products, but they remind us that the global marketplace of the twenty-first century is not a new phenomenon and that "the local has always been irradiated, as it were, by the larger world."⁵⁴ In becoming available to a broader segment of English society, these imports from the Islamic worlds of the early modern era preserved their ancient, "exotic" allure but also acquired new meanings. In the cases of the lord mayor's velvet gown, the shoemakers' satin hoods, Joan's gingerbread, and Islington whitepot, "it becomes impossible [to quote Greenblatt again] to say any longer which elements are native and which imported from elsewhere."⁵⁵ The moralists might rail against "heathen" imports, but in these plays, goods from the Islamic East are appropriated to domestic uses and integrated into the life of middle- and lower-class Londoners.

NOTES

1. Jonathan Gil Harris, *Sick Economies: Drama, Mercantilism and Disease in Shakespeare's England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 22.
2. Kristen G. Brookes, "Inhaling the Alien: Race and Tobacco in Early Modern England," and Gitanjali Shahani, "'A Foreigner by Birth': The Life of Indian Cloth in the Early Modern Marketplace," in *Global Traffic: Discourses and Practices of Trade in English Literature and Culture from 1550 to 1700*, eds. Barbara Sebek and Stephen Deng (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 157–78 and 179–98, respectively. For English debates about tobacco, see also Sandra Bell, "'The Subject of Smoke': Tobacco and Early Modern England," in *The Mysterious and Foreign in Early Modern England*, eds. Helen Ostovich, Mary V. Silcox, and Graham Roebuck (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 153–69.
3. Shahani, "'A Foreigner by Birth,'" 194. While pure cotton fabric, mostly from India, was proscribed, "cotton wool" (raw cotton) from Cyprus, Smyrna, and Syria continued to supply English producers of

- blended fabrics, such as “fustian” (a blend of cotton and linen); see Alfred C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (1935; rpt. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1964), 74. The word “fustian” derives from “Fostat . . . a suburb of Cairo where cloth was manufactured”; *Oxford English Dictionary* [OED], 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), <http://dictionary.oed.com>, accessed June 7, 2010.
4. See, for example, Woodruff D. Smith, “From Coffeehouse to Parlour: The Consumption of Coffee, Tea, and Sugar in Northwestern Europe in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” and Jordan Goodman, “Excitantia, Or, how Enlightenment Europe Took to Soft Drugs,” both in *Consuming Habits: Drugs in History and Anthropology*, eds. Jordan Goodman, Paul E. Lovejoy, and Andrew Sherratt (London: Routledge, 1995), 148–64 and 126–47, respectively. Goodman’s article discusses tobacco and chocolate as well as coffee and tea.
 5. See Shahani, “‘A Foreigner by Birth,’” 194–5, and Roze Hentschell, *The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England: Textual Constructions of a National Identity* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), 6n13.
 6. There were, of course, many other imports from the Levant and Asia: cotton, dyes (such as indigo and madder), wine, oil, currants, sugar (imported from Barbary before the establishment of New World plantations), rhubarb, carpets, medicinals, jewels, and gold.
 7. Salerio’s emphasis on silk and spice is doubly interesting since Antonio’s ships are described as returning from a variety of places, including England and Mexico, as well as India and the Levant (3.2.267–9).
 8. Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, *The Shah’s Silk for Europe’s Silver: The Eurasian Trade of the Julfa Armenians in Safavid Iran and India, 1530–1750* (Atlanta, Georgia: The Scholars Press, 1999), 23.
 9. True cinnamon’s poor relation, cassia (*Cinnamomum cassia*), imported from China, was and is used as a cheaper substitute. See Jack Turner, *Spice: The History of a Temptation* (New York: Knopf, 2004), xxiii.
 10. *Ibid.*, xv, xxii, 145.
 11. Turner reports that the only ship that survived Magellan’s circumnavigation of the globe brought back 381 bags of cloves plus a small amount of other spices, a total of 60,060 pounds or 27,300 kilograms. The sale of this “small holdful of cloves” covered the entire cost of his three-year voyage, including four lost ships, sailors’ pay and pensions, weapons, instruments, payments to the families of sailors killed, and other expenses (35–6).
 12. Wood, *Levant Company*, 30.
 13. *Ibid.*, 43. English merchants also reexported silk and currants to Europe and the New World; see Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 13.

14. Daniel Vitkus, relying on Ottoman historians Halil Inalcik, Suraiya Faroqhi, and Donald Quataert, reports that imports of raw silk grew from 11,904 pounds per year in 1560 to 117,740 pounds per year in 1621 (“‘The Common Market of All the World’: English Theater, the Global System, and the Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern Period,” in Sebek and Deng, *Global Traffic*, 27). “Raw silk” is yarn or fabric that still contains the gummy sericin that binds together the twin filaments of fibroin.
15. Lawrence Stone, quoted in Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, 22.
16. Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 57.
17. McCabe, *The Shah’s Silk*, 1.
18. *Ibid.*, 22, 29.
19. Differences in quality were also noted among silks from different parts of Asia. Writing in 1578, merchant John Newbury reports that the silks (perhaps of Chinese origin) he saw in “Feloge” (Falluja in modern Iraq) were “much better then that which cometh out of Persia.” In addition, the prices he recorded for different spices and for silk suggest both the hierarchy among spices (the more distant, the more costly) and the degree to which finished silk commanded the highest prices of all. Cloves, mace, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, and pepper ranged from less than a ducat to six ducats per “batman” (a measure of weight), with clove, mace, and cinnamon at the high end, while fine “silke . . . [sold for] duckets eleven and a half the Batman”; Newbery’s letter was published in 1625 by Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Postumus, or Purchas his Pilgrimes*, 20 vols. (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1905–7), 9:493–4.
20. Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, 57.
21. Hentschell, *The Culture of Cloth*, 6n13.
22. For instance, in *The Alchemist*, Subtle promises that the supposed “Spanish count” will show the rich young widow all the sights and fashionable shopping areas of London, including “th’ Exchange, / . . . [and] the China-houses”; see Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist*, 2nd ed., ed. Elizabeth Cook (London: A.C. Black, 1991) 4.4.48. Future references will be given parenthetically..
23. Harold J. Cook, *Matters of Exchange: Commerce, Medicine, and Science in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2007), 3.
24. Jean E. Howard, *The Theatre of a City: The Places of London Comedy, 1598–1642* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 20.
25. Lea Knudsen Allen, “‘Not every man has the luck to go to Corinth’: Accruing Exotic Capital in *The Jew of Malta* and *Volpone*,” in Sebek and Deng, *Global Traffic*, 95–114, esp. 97.

26. *OED*, s.v. damask, sarcenet, and taffeta. The editors note that the English word "satin" resembles the Arabic word *zaitūnī*, perhaps derived from the name of a Chinese city or from *sze-tün*, the Cantonese word for satin, but they judge a direct connection to be "extremely improbable."
27. John Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, ed. David Crane (London: A&C Black, 1997), 1.2.31–5. Future references will be given parenthetically.
28. Phillip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), quoted in Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, 5.
29. Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, 2nd ed., ed. Anthony Parr (London: A&C Black, 1990), 7.105 sd-108. Future references will be given parenthetically by scene and line number. In addition to referring to ancient Middle Easterners ("Philistines" [7.108], "Mesopotamians" [7.78], and "Pharaoh" [7.36]), Eyre also alludes to "Sultan Soliman" and "Tamburlaine" (20.55), "the King of Babylon," and "Tamar Cham" (21.23).
30. "Velvet-jacket" was a slang term for a mayor (Parr's note to 17.38).
31. Parr's note to 1.0 sd identifies this character.
32. Having noted ironically that Lacy might "do well / Now he hath learned an occupation" (shoemaking), Oatley adds in an aside, "And yet I scorn to call him son-in-law" (1.43–4).
33. Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, ed. Edward B. Partridge (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 1.1.19–23. The dialog makes it clear that she would have preferred a more homely cap, "a rough country beaver, with a copper-band, like the coney-skin woman of Budge-row" (1.1 20–3). Future references will be given parenthetically.
34. Francis Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, ed. Michael Hattaway (London: A&C Black, 1969), 5.326. Future references will be given by act and line number (there are no scene divisions in the text).
35. Mistress Overdo seems to view her hood as the counterpart or mirror of her husband's judicial hood, "the mark of her husband's dignity as Justice" (Partridge's note to 1.4.82).
36. Tufted or "tuft" taffeta was an extra fancy taffeta silk with raised stripes or spots; see Parr's note to 4.4.146.
37. These temptations have their desired effect, despite the fact the "green gowns" may denote dresses that are grass-stained by the outdoor version of a "roll in the hay."
38. Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker, *The Roaring Girl*, 2nd ed., ed. Elizabeth Cook (London: A&C Black, 1997), 4.2.6–7. Future references will be given parenthetically.
39. Recent research into household records confirms that silk fabric and clothing could be very expensive. Jones and Stallybrass report that in 1610 the Earl of Rutland spent a total of fifty-three pounds, five

shillings for crimson velvet and ermine. In the same year, other aristocrats purchased “crimson cloth of tissue” and figured satin at four pounds, twelve shillings, and twenty-two shillings per yard, respectively. In the 1630s, Lord Spencer laid out fourteen pounds, fifteen shillings, threepence for a scarlet cloak and one pound, fourteen shillings for a pair of “carnation” silk stockings (*Renaissance Clothing*, 21). To put these sums in perspective, Jones and Stallybrass compare them to the cost of attending a play at the Globe for one to three pennies. They also use the value of various items Henslowe pawned or accepted as collateral to calculate the items’ original cost. For example, a pair of silk stockings for which Henslowe advanced ten shillings might originally have cost between twenty shillings (one pound) and fifty shillings, and a “branched damaske [gown] lyned . . . throwghe wth pinckned tafetie” on which he loaned five pounds might have cost between ten and twenty-five pounds when new (31).

40. Jones and Stallybrass have an extended discussion of the use of clothing as payment to courtiers and servants and as collateral for loans (*Renaissance Clothing*, 22–3, 26–8).
41. I take a “neet-cap” to be a nightcap. As demonstrated in “To Sleep, Perchance to Dream,” an exhibition at the Folger Shakespeare Library, February 19 to May 30, 2009, nightcaps could be very ornate and finely worked with gold and silver thread and silk.
42. Green ginger (gingerroot preserved in sweet syrup) and dried ginger were both popular in medieval and early modern times, but fresh ginger was unknown, since it could not be transported without spoilage (Turner, *Spice*, xxiii).
43. Joan hawks it as “comfortable bread,” which the editor glosses as “nourishing” (note to 2.5.9), but perhaps it would also qualify as “comfort food,” in the modern sense.
44. Turner, *Spice*, 113–17.
45. Modern pepper spray is, however, derived from the New World chili pepper, not the black pepper of India.
46. Quoted in Cook’s note to 4.2.12.
47. Hattaway’s note to 4.119.
48. Parr’s note to 20.49.
49. Quoted in Turner, *Spice*, 12.
50. For a discussion of Portuguese activities in connection with the pepper trade, see Bindu Malieckal, “Muslims, Matriliny, and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*,” *The Muslim World* 95.2 (2005): 297–320, esp. 301–5, and her unpublished conference paper “Muslims, Christians, and Spices: Renaissance Re-Tellings of Religious Conflict in the Indian Ocean, from East Africa to South India,” Seaborne Renaissance: Global Exchanges and Religion in Early Modernity, University of Texas at Austin, February 6, 2010, cited by permission. In the latter, she also notes that some critics argue that England’s

- “more peaceable” tactics ultimately evolved into an “advanced machinery of control, more destructive than any Portuguese engagement” (9).
51. For a discussion of Dryden’s *Amboyna* (1673), a play based on the Amboyna massacre, see Bindu Malieckal, “Mariam Khan and the Legacy of Mughal Women in Early Modern Literature of India,” in this volume.
 52. Turner, *Spice*, 304. Moreover, he continues, the later construction of spice as a mark of otherness is now “so thoroughly implanted . . . that native *Mediterranean* aromatics such as cumin, coriander, saffron, and fennel have come to be more associated with the cuisine of the countries that adopted them [such as India] than with the lands of their origins—a reminder that the cultural traffic that travelled along the spice routes went both ways” (305–6, emphasis added).
 53. Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, 7. The authors also argue that individuals’ investment in the social and physical value of objects is, in fact, inconsistent with an emphasis on their exchange value, on their status as “commodities” in the Marxian sense (8).
 54. Stephen Greenblatt, with Ines G. Županov, Reinhard Meyer-Kalkus, Heike Paul, Pál Nyíri, and Friedrike Pannewick, *Cultural Mobility: A Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 2–5, esp 4.
 55. *Ibid.*, 19.

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INDEX

- Abbas I, Safavid shah, 54, 55, 59, 60–1,
 63–4, 66, 69 n.21, 70 n.31, n.37,
 71 n.46, n.50, 72 n.55, 184
 Accoramboni, Vittoria, 178
 Achaemenid empire, 56
 ‘adālat, 68 n.11
 Admiral’s Men, 59, 150
 Adriatic Sea, 176
 Africa, Africans, 44, 47, 88 n.3, 103,
 138 n.18, 189, 194 n.28
 biblical traditions about, 25, 36–9
 in English literature, 4, 5–7, 15 n.22,
 17 n.32, 18 n.34, 57, 67 n.8, 78,
 86, 93 n.49, 212 n.21
 and intermarriage, 41–2, 45–6
 see also Moors
 Africanus, Leo, 6, 18 n.34, 212 n.21
 Geographical Historie of Africa, 18
 n.34, 212 n.21
 Akbar the Great, Mughal emperor, 97,
 99–102, 108–9, 120 n.58
alavi, 66, 72 n.58
 Alexander the Great, 150, 169, 171 n.16
 Algeria, 180
 ‘Ali, first Shi’a imam; fourth Sunni
 caliph, 25, 60, 62, 64–5, 72 n.53
 al-Karaki, 64
 allegory, 66
 Allen, Lea Knudsen, 220, 234 n.25
 Almanzor, Jacob (Abú Yūsuf Ya’kúb ibn
 Yūsuf), 8, 39, 46–8
 Amboyne, 98, 115–16, 231, 237 n.51
 Ambrose, Saint, 25
 Amurath I, *see* Murad I
 Andrea, Bernadette, 6, 8, 9, 13 n.6, 16
 n.24, n.26, 17 n.27, 18 n.34, 67
 n.1, 87 n.1, 88 n.4, 91 n.30, 93
 n.49, 117 n.1, 118 n.6, 119 n.38,
 175, 192 n.4, 212 n.21
 Andrews, Kenneth R., 75, 89
 Anglican, 142, 183
 Anstey, Lavinia Mary, 126, 136 n.6
 anti-Catholicism, 192 n.2
 see also Catholicism
 apostasy, 29, 182, 191
 Arabia, 24, 39, 41, 45, 58, 136 n.7
 Argo, Charles, 181, 194 n.31
 Arlidge, Anthony, 193 n.16
 Armenians, 71 n.50, 97, 101–3, 105,
 117 n.3
 Ashley, Robert, 47–8, 51 n.26
 ‘Ashura, 61, 69 n.28
 Asia, Asian(s), 8, 15 n.24, 53, 88 n.4,
 90 n.18, 92 n.40, 109, 113, 119
 n.38, 126, 136 n.7, 200, 233 n.6,
 234 n.19
 biblical traditions about, 38
 in English literature, 16 n.26, 73–4,
 76–9, 83, 94 n.59, 212 n.21
 see also India; Tartar(s)
 Astington, John, 179, 193 n.23
 Avity, Pierre d’, 138 n.20

 Babinger, Franz, 193 n.22
 Babylon, 57, 146, 149, 150, 235 n.29
 Balthazar, 9, 23–6, 29, 213 n.38
 baptism, 9, 21–2, 25, 27–30, 32, 69
 n.21
 Barbour, Richmond, 16 n.25, 68 n.15,
 91 n.29, 118 n.5, n.9, 120 n.42,
 167, 171 n.13, 193 n.24, 211 n.15
 Bargrave, Thomas, 123
 Barksted, William, 162, 171
 Hiren: or The Faire Greeke, 162, 171
 Baron, Robert, 53
 Mirza, A Tragedy, 53
 Bartels, Emily C., 17 n.32, 57, 67 n.8,
 69 n.20, 167, 171 n.12

- Barthelemy, Anthony Gerard, 4, 15 n.22
 Bartholomew, Saint, 227
 Baudier, Michel, 130, 132
 Beaumont, Francis, 220, 235 n.34
 The Knight of the Burning Pestle, 141,
 220, 224–5, 227–8, 230, 235 n.34
 Beck, Brandon, 4, 15 n.21
 Berek, Peter, 140, 155 n.1, 156 n.3
 Best, George, 37–8, 49 n.9
 Birchwood, Matthew, 17 n.30, 192 n.3
 black, blackness, 9, 22–7, 29–30, 30
 n.13, 31 n.23, n.24, 36, 51 n.24,
 74–8, 80, 82–5, 90 n.23, 104–5,
 115, 148, 188
 see also race
 Blount, Henry, 17, 125
 A Voyage into the Levant, 131–2, 138
 Bohemia, 175–7
 book history, 124
 border zone, *see* Frontier
 Bosnia, 3, 176–7
 boundary, 181, 186
 boundary-crossing, 186–7, 190–1
 Bower, Walter
 Scoticchronicon, 195 n.43
 Bragadin, Marcantonio, 22
 Brathwaite, Richard
 Panthalia, 187, 195 n.42
 Braude, Benjamin, 239
 Brennan, Michael, 123–4, 135 n.1–3,
 136 n.7
 Britain's Burse, *see* New Exchange
 British empire, 75
 Brookes, Kristen B., 215, 232 n.2
 Brotton, Jerry, 6, 13 n.6, 194 n.24
 Brummet, Palmira, 210 n.9
 Bruster, Douglas, 210 n.8
 Bullough, Geoffrey, 176, 192 n.6
 Burian, Orhan, 4, 15 n.19–20
 Burman, Thomas E., 194 n.32
 Burnett, Mark Thornton, 151, 153, 158
 n.40, n.43
 Burton, Jonathan, 6–7, 15 n.22, 16
 n.25, 18 n.34–5, n.38, 51 n.20,
 n.23, 57, 67 n.1, n.6, n.9, 69 n.23,
 89 n.14, 90 n.17, 155 n.1, 157
 n.25, 184–5, 191–2, 195 n.39–40,
 196 n.52, 200, 210 n.9, 211 n.19,
 212 n.21
 Busbecq, Ogier Ghiselin de, 132
 Butler, Martin, 31 n.16, 80–1, 88 n.6,
 92 n.45–9, 93 n.50, 212 n.23
 Byram (Eid al-Fitr), 137 n.15
 Byzantine empire, 3, 7, 193 n.22
 Caesar, Julius, 48, 150, 154, 158
 calico, 215
 Calicut, 231
 Calvin, John, 27, 32 n.24, n.27
 captivity narratives, 4, 15 n.24, 49 n.6,
 183
 Carew, Richard, 151, 157 n.35
 Carlell, Lodowick, 4
 *Osmond The Great Turk, Or The
 Noble Servant*, 162
 Carmelites, 63, 71 n.47
 carnival, *see* Epiphany, Feast of the
 Casimir, John, Count Palatine, 205
 castrati, *see* eunuch
Catechism of the Council of Trent, 28,
 32 n.31
 Catholicism, 22, 29, 31 n.24, 69 n.21,
 142, 178, 184, 192 n.2, 212 n.21
 see also anti-Catholicism
 Cavanagh, Shelia T., 75, 77, 87 n.1, 89
 n.16, 91 n.30, 92 n.35, n.38, 94
 n.59
 Cecil, Robert, Earl Salisbury, 202–3,
 212 n.24, 213 n.32, n.35
 Cecil, William, Lord Burghley, 135 n.4
 Central Asia, 8–9, 73–4, 76–7, 88 n.4,
 90 n.18, 104
 see also Asia
 Chaharmahal, 71 n.50
 Charles I, king of England, 47–8, 50
 n.18, 66
 Chew, Samuel C., 3–5, 14 n.12, n.14,
 54, 68 n.12, 155 n.2, 184, 195
 n.36
 Christendom, 7, 26, 77, 149, 183, 194
 n.32
 Christian(s), Christianity, 3, 5–10, 12
 n.3, 29, 32, 35–7, 41–8, 49 n.2, 51
 n.22–3, 68 n.13, 73, 75–80, 83,
 86–7, 87 n.2, 89 n.16, 90 n.20,
 115–17, 139–42, 145, 148–50, 157
 n.26, 173–5, 191, 194 n.30, 204
 Arab perceptions of, 6–7, 18 n.39
 in India, 97, 99–106, 236 n.50
 and Persia, 54, 58–9, 71 n.50

- views of Islam, 6–7, 9, 17 n.30, 22–5, 41–2, 69 n.25, 211 n.20
- views of the Turks, 161–4, 166–9, 173–5, 200, 206
- see also* baptism; Catholicism; conversion
- circumcision, 22–3, 28, 180, 182
- city comedy, 141, 199, 210 n.8, 211 n.15
- civic pageantry, 4, 10, 211 n.15
- Clement VIII, Pope, 64
- Clifford, Anne, 136 n.4
- Clifford, George, 3rd earl of Cumberland, 135–6 n.4
- Cobelitz (Miloš Obilić), 162, 164, 166–7, 169
- Colley, Linda, 189, 195 n.48
- colonial, 4–5, 16 n.26, 17 n.28, n.32, 18 n.34, 50 n.20, 74, 76–7, 79, 88 n.8, 91 n.29, 98, 115, 117, 118 n.4–5, 120 n.43, 121 n.74, 202, 212 n.21
- commodities, 6, 10, 101, 110, 113, 198, 203, 205, 215–16, 220–1, 226, 228, 231, 237 n.53
- Constantinople (Istanbul), 3, 9, 93 n.49, 94 n.71, 136 n.5, 140, 176, 192 n.5, 208 n.1
- descriptions of, 123–35, 197, 205–7
- illustrations of, in Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey*, 131, 138 n.19
- conversion, 8, 22–3, 30 n.6, 42, 45–6, 54–5, 60–1, 63–4, 68 n.13, 69 n.21, 70 n.36, 71 n.46, n.50, 77, 89 n.16, 102, 105, 120 n.41, 142, 148–9, 174, 178–82, 183, 191, 198, 209 n.3, 211–12 n.20
- convert, 6, 39, 43, 45–6, 51 n.22, 63, 71 n.50–1, 76, 101, 115–16, 142, 149, 173–4, 180–1, 183–4, 189–91, 206, 208, 209 n.3, 212 n.21
- Cook, Elizabeth, 226, 234 n.22, 235 n.38
- Cooper, Helen, 141, 145–6, 149, 155 n.2, 156 n.7, n.9, n.15, 157 n.19, n.27
- Cope, Sir Walter, 213 n.34
- Coryat, Thomas, 68, 136
- cosmopolitan, 74, 78, 80, 84–5, 201, 208
- Crane, Ronald S., 146, 156 n.6, n.19
- Croatia, 175–7, 187
- cross-cultural, 79–80, 84, 86, 92 n.36, 141
- cross-dressing, 175
- cultural exchange, 6, 17 n.27, 94 n.71
- cultural mobility, 232, 237 n.54
- Cyprus, 21–2, 30 n.5, 89 n.16, 174–5, 192 n.5, 232 n.3
- Daborne, Robert
- A Christian Turn'd Turk*, 139, 204
- Dallam, Thomas, 123, 207, 214 n.44–5
- Dalmatia, *see* Illyria
- Damascus, 152, 220
- D'Amico, Jack, 15 n.22, 31 n.20, 214 n.43
- Daniel, Norman, 4, 15 n.21
- Davis, Natalie Zemon, 6, 18 n.34
- Day, John, William Rowley, and George Wilkins
- The Travels of the Three English Brothers*, 53, 55, 66, 67 n.4, 195 n.39
- Dekker, Thomas
- If This Be Not A Good Play The Devil is In It*, 206, 214 n.42
- The Roaring Girl*, 220, 225, 229–30, 235 n.38
- The Seven Deadly Sinnes of London*, 209 n.7
- The Shoemaker's Holiday*, 220–1, 225, 228, 230, 235 n.29
- Denham, John, 55, 66, 72 n.61
- Devereux, Robert, 2nd earl of Essex, 59, 154
- devşirme* (*devşirme*), 182, 194 n.31
- Dimmock, Matthew, 6, 17 n.30, 147, 156 n.4, 157 n.20, 161, 170 n.3, 192 n.3, 193 n.19
- Don Juan of Persia, 57, 61, 69 n.21, 72 n.57, n.59
- Drake, Francis, 188
- drugs, 228, 230, 233 n.4
- Dryden, John
- Amboyna*, 8, 97, 113, 114, 121 n.79, 237 n.51
- Aurang-Zebe*, 8, 113–14, 116, 121 n.80
- Dutch East India Company, 110, 203

- East India Company, 8, 98–100, 113, 124, 231
- East-West
 binary, 5–6
 cultural exchanges, 6
 dualism, 2
 trade, 6, 10
see also spice trade
- Egyptian, 24, 27, 183, 187, 189, 195 n.43
- Elizabeth I, queen of England, 17 n.26, 19 n.44, 91 n.40, 147, 177, 188
- empire(s)
 discourse of, 74, 79
 dynastic, 86
 Islamic, 173, 179
- Envoy, 99, 184, 186
- Epiphany, Feast of the, 173, 175
- Estate of Christians, Living under the Subjection of the Turke*, 181
- eunuch, 7, 25, 29, 178–80, 183–4, 191, 193 n.22–3, 201
- Euphrates, 59
- Eurasia, 3, 73, 78, 233 n.8
- Eyre, John, 137 n.16, 235 n.29
- Fairfax, Edward, 151, 157 n.37
- farr*, 65
- Fars, 68 n.19
- Ferdinand I, duke of Tuscany, 69 n.21, 177
- fetishism, 231–2
- Field, Nathan
A Woman Is a Weathercock, 213 n.38
- Fielding, Henry, 147–8, 157 n.23
- Floyd-Wilson, Mary, 50 n.10
- Flugosius, Baptista, 57
- Formula of Concord*, 27
- Foxe, John
Actes and Monuments, 210 n.10
- Franciscan, 66
- Frontier, 7, 114, 173–5, 177–8, 181, 186–7, 191
- Frye, Susan, 79, 92 n.42
- Fuchs, Barbara, 13 n.6, 50 n.17, 180, 194 n.27
- Gainsford, Thomas, 131–2, 140
- Gasior, Mary Ann Weber, 151, 156 n.2, 157 n.31, n.33
- Gaurs (gabr)*, 71 n.46
- Gavariono (Raab), siege of, 178
- genealogy, 1–2, 38, 41, 50 n.18, 51 n.20
- Giordano, Paolo, 178
- Giovio, Paulo
Shorte Treatise vpon the Turkes Chronicles, 177
- globalization, 198, 202, 208
- Glover, Thomas, 207, 214 n.45
- Godfrey of Bouillon, 9, 139–42, 149–51, 157 n.28
- Goffe, Thomas
The Courageous Turk, 4, 10, 161, 164, 166, 170
- Goffman, Daniel, 13 n.6, 74, 88 n.9, 89 n.13
- Goughe, Hugh, 200, 211 n.16, n.20
- Gower, John, 180
- Greenblatt, Stephen, 91 n.26, 191 n.1, 232, 237 n.54
- Greene, Robert
Alphonsus, King of Aragon, 139, 147
Selimus, Emperour of the Turks, 139, 147–8, 177
- Greg, Walter W., 151
- Guinea, 194 n.28
- guinea-fowl, 194 n.28
see also turkey-cock
- Gulbadan Begam, 103, 106–8, 117, 119 n.30, 120 n.52
- gunpowder, 22, 188
- Guy, earl of Warwick, 9, 139–43, 145–6, 148, 150, 155 n.2, 156 n.7, n.8, n.11–12, 157 n.29
- Guy of Warwick*, 156 n.6, n.10–11, n.18, 157 n.19
see also *Tragical History, Admirable Atchievements and Various Events of Guy of Warwick*
- bajj*, 86 n.11, 107–8
- Hakluyt, Richard, 95 n.74, 104, 136 n.4
The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation, 79
- Hall, Kim F., 75, 77, 80, 84, 87 n.1, 89 n.17, 90 n.23, 91 n.25, 92 n.43

- Ham (Cham), son of Noah, 25, 37–9, 76, 90 n.21
- harem, 101–2, 112, 118 n.6, 119 n.25, 120 n.44, 179, 193 n.22
- Harris, Jonathan Gil, 215, 232 n.1
- Hawkins, William, 8, 98–106, 109–10, 112–13, 116, 118–21
- heathen, 106, 149, 173, 182, 215, 232
- Heidelberg, Great Tun of, 136 n.7
- Heliodorus, 88 n.5, 93 n.54, 195 n.50
Æthiopica, 51 n.24, 189
- Henslowe, Philip, 141, 150–1, 157 n.32, 236 n.39
- Herat, 68 n.19
- heresy, 23, 58, 179, 187, 190
- Heywood, Thomas, 140–1, 153–5, 199
The Fair Maid of the West, Part 2, 148
The Four Prentices of London, 139, 141–2, 149–51, 155, 156 n.2, 157 n.31, 158 n.40–1
Hey for Honesty, 210 n.11
Londini Emporia, or London's Mercatura, 210 n.10
- Hibbert, Christopher, 193 n.17
- Hic Mulier*, 49 n.4
- Hillman, Richard, 147, 157 n.21
- Hodgson, Marshall G. S., 1–2, 11 n.1, 13 n.7, 14 n.8
- Holy Roman empire, 69 n.21, 74, 77–8, 87 n.2, 178
- Hondius, Henricus, 136 n.7
- honor, 43–4, 83, 85, 94 n.65, 100, 111–12, 127, 164, 166, 168, 178, 204, 208, 221
- Hormuz, 71 n.50
- Hotson, Leslie, 177–8, 193 n.15
- Howard, Jean E., 210 n.8, 234 n.24
- humours, 208, 208 n.2, 209 n.2, 213 n.31
- Husayn 'Ali Beg, 61, 69 n.21
- Husayn ibn 'Ali, 61, 69 n.28, 70 n.37
- hybridity, 3, 6, 9, 59–60, 74, 88 n.8, 126, 210 n.11
- idolatry, 190–1
- Ilkhanid, 56, 68 n.19
- Illyria (Dalmatia), 7, 174–9, 181, 186–7, 189, 191, 192 n.8–10, 193 n.18, 194 n.33, 196 n.51
- imperial desire, 38, 73–4, 78
- imperialism, 1, 11 n.2, 14 n.8, 67 n.8, 75, 175, 211 n.15
- India, Indians, 3, 5, 8, 14 n.9, 15–16 n.24–6, 53, 68 n.15, 71 n.46, 117 n.3, 118 n.4–5, n.7, n.10–12, 120 n.58, n.80, 126–8, 133, 203–4, 215–16, 231, 232 n.2–3, 233–8
in English literature, 80–1, 113–17, 121 n.80, 233 n.7, 237 n.51
women in, 97–113, 114
see also Armenians; East India Company
- Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 32 n.27, 64
- intermarriage, 42, 45, 99–106
- Irshad*, 65
- Isfahan, 9, 60, 67 n.1, 71 n.50
- Islam, 109, 120 n.56, 137 n.15
in English literature, 4–7, 15 n.22, n.24, 16 n.24–5, 17 n.29, 53–61, 64–7, 68 n.10, 75–8, 80, 120 n.41, 141–2, 148–9, 155, 173, 180, 191, 198
Western views of, 1–11, 11 n.1, 12 n.3, 13 n.6–7, 15 n.21–2, 21–4, 35–6, 39–41, 44–8, 131–2, 206
see also Shi'a; Sufi; Sunni
- Islamdom, 2
- Islamicate, 2, 16 n.24
- Islamicization, 60
- Islamic world, 1, 3, 7–8, 11, 12 n.3, 17 n.27, 98, 198–9, 201, 205, 214 n.45, 232
- Isma'il I, Safavid shah, 65, 70 n.31
- Isma'il II, Safavid shah, 54, 65
- 'ismat*, 58, 65, 69 n.26
- Italy, 103, 117, 136 n.7, 177, 184, 209 n.7
- Jabal 'Amil, 61, 65
- Jackson, Ken, 192 n.2
- Jacobean, 35, 49 n.4, 74–5, 80–1, 83–4, 86, 88 n.6, 94 n.72
- Jahangir, Mughal emperor, 8, 97–106, 109–14, 118 n.10, 119 n.34, 120 n.42
- James I, king of England, 81, 99, 188
- janissary, janissaries, 181
- Jardine, Lisa, 2, 6, 13 n.6, 194 n.24, 219, 234 n.16

- Jensen, Phoebe, 192 n.2
 Jerome, Saint, 31 n.23
 Jones, Ann Rosalind, 219, 232, 233
 n.13, 234 n.15, n.20, 235 n.28,
 n.39, 236 n.39–40, 237 n.53
 Jones, Eldred, 4, 15 n.22
 Jonson, Ben
 The Alchemist, 204, 211 n.12, 214
 n.40, 220, 225–8, 234 n.22
 Bartholomew Fair, 207, 220, 223–4,
 226–7, 229–30, 235 n.33
 Entertainment at Britain's Burse, 10,
 197, 199, 201–3, 211 n.15, 213
 n.26, n.34–5, 214 n.39
 Epicoene, 202
 Every Man in His Humour, 199, 210
 n.11, 211 n.14
 Every Man out of His Humour, 10,
 197, 199–200, 205, 208, 208
 n.1–2
 The Magnetic Lady, 213 n.31
 The Masque of Blackness, 81–2, 84–5,
 93 n.52, 211 n.15, 212 n.21
 The Masque of Queens, 212 n.21
 “To Robert, Earle of Salisburie,” 212
 n.24, 213 n.32
 Volpone, 201–2, 212 n.22, 234 n.25
 Julfa, 64, 71 n.50, 233 n.8

 Kartid, 68 n.19
 Kerman, 68 n.19, 71 n.46
 Khan, Mariam, 8, 97–103, 105–7,
 109–17, 117 n.1, n.3, 121 n.71,
 237 n.51
 Kidd, Colin, 36, 49 n.8
 Kinross, John Balfour, 193 n.22
 Knights, Lionel C., 202, 213 n.27
 Knolles, Richard, 56, 132, 161–3,
 165–8, 171 n.10
 Generall Historie of the Turkes, 22,
 161, 171 n.6
 Knowles, James, 202, 212 n.23, 213
 n.26, n.34–5, 214 n.39
 Knutson, Roslyn L., 145, 151, 156 n.14,
 158 n.38
 Köprülü, Mehmet Fuat, 193 n.22
 Kyd, Thomas, 139, 147, 213 n.38
 Soliman and Perseda, 139, 147, 213
 n.38
 The Spanish Tragedy, 213 n.38

 Lanquet, Thomas, 177, 193 n.13
 Epitome of Chronicles, 177, 193 n.13
 Laud, Archbishop, 183
 “Laudian Rite for Returned
 Renegades,” 183
 Lavardin, Jacques de, 211 n.11
 The History of George Castriot,
 Surnamed Scanderbeg, 211
 Lello, Henry, 207, 213 n.35
 Levant, 5, 14 n.11, 54, 99, 207, 214
 n.45, 216, 233 n.6–7
 liminal, liminality, 7, 54, 58–9, 62,
 65–6, 74, 177–8, 186, 191, 212
 n.21
 Linche, Richard, 38, 50 n.15
 Litchfield, Nicholas, 231
 History of the Discovery and Conquest
 of India by the Portuguese, 231
 Lithgow, William
 The Totall Discourse of the Rare
 Adventures, and Painefull
 Peregrinations, 214 n.45
 Lloyd, Richard, 150, 157 n.30
 London, 10–11, 54–5, 59–60, 63,
 66–7, 68 n.15, 92 n.33, 98, 110,
 113, 126, 128, 134, 149–51, 176,
 197–99, 201–8, 209 n.4, 210 n.8,
 215–20, 222, 229–32, 234 n.22
 Loomba, Ania, 6, 15 n.22, 16 n.26, 18
 n.33–4, 50–1 n.20, 89 n.14, 90
 n.17
 Lopes, Fernando Castaheda, 231
 Lorimer, Joyce, 135 n.2
 Luna, Miguel de, 8, 39–40, 42–3,
 46–8, 50 n.17, 51 n.26
 Historia Verdad del Rey don Roderigo,
 51 n.21
Lust's Dominion, 6
 luxury goods, 219–20
 see also silk; spice(s)

 MacDonald, Joyce Green, 192 n.7
 Macedon, 181
 Machiavelli, Machiavellianism, 166, 170
 MacLean, Gerald, 6–7, 14 n.8, 17 n.27,
 18 n.41, 19 n.43, 94 n.71, 123,
 135 n.2, 194 n.26
 Mahomet II, *see* Mehmed II
 Malieckal, Bindu, 8, 14 n.9, 119 n.35,
 120 n.41, n.58, 236 n.50, 237 n.51

- Mandeville, John, 38, 50 n.14
 manuscripts, 123, 135 n.2, 136 n.7
 circulation of, 123–4
 revision of, 135 n.2
 see also Mundy, Peter
 Manwaring, George, 194 n.35
 A True Discourse of Sir Anthony Sherley's Travels into Persia, 194 n.35
 maps, mapping, 76, 83, 90 n.18, 126, 131, 136 n.7, 138 n.19
 Mariam uz-Zamani (Rajkumari Kira Kunwari), 102, 106, 117
 Marlowe, Christopher, 55–9, 66, 67 n.8, 69 n.22, n.29, 70 n.30, 139–40, 145–8, 153–5, 155 n.2, 156 n.14, 211 n.11
 Tamburlaine, Parts 1 and 2, 6–7, 10, 14 n.14, 54–9, 66, 67 n.8, 68 n.17, 104, 120 n.58, 139–40, 142, 145–8, 151–4, 155 n.1, 156 n.17, 161, 171 n.12
 Marotti, Arthur, 192 n.2
 Marston, John, 220, 235 n.27
 The Dutch Courtesan, 220–1, 225
 Martin Marprelate, 149
Masque of Indian and China Knights, *The*, 81
 masques, 4, 6, 75, 80–1, 83, 85–6, 92 n.49, 162, 169, 212 n.21
 Massignon, Louis, 2, 13 n.7
 Massinger, Philip, 180
 The Renegado, 14 n.11, 105, 120 n.41, 139, 180, 199, 211 n.13
 Matar, Nabil, 6–7, 13 n.6, 16 n.24, 17 n.27, n.31, 18 n.39, 19 n.44, 38, 48 n.1, 50 n.12, 51 n.23, 53, 67 n.2, 89 n.13, 155 n.1, 189, 193 n.24, 195 n.49
 Maurice, Saint, 9, 24–6, 29, 30–1 n.13, 31 n.15–16, 31–2 n.24
 Mazandaran, 68 n.19
 Mazdaism, 60–1
 McCabe, Ina Baghdiantz, 219, 233 n.8, 234 n.17
 McCannet, Linda, 7, 10, 14 n.10, n.14, 16 n.26, 17 n.27, 18 n.40, 48–9 n.2, 53, 55, 67 n.1, n.3, 68 n.16, 92 n.46, 167, 171 n.13, 211 n.15
 Mediterranean, 15–16 n.24, 18 n.35, 22, 68 n.18, 74, 88 n.12, 140–1, 155 n.1, 159, 170 n.1, 175–8, 188–9, 192 n.3, 193 n.18, 195 n.49, 196 n.51, 198–9, 202, 209 n.3, 210 n.9, 216, 219, 237 n.52
 Mehmed II, Ottoman sultan, 161, 171 n.16, 193 n.22
 Mehmed III, Ottoman sultan, 147, 207
 Memphis, 189
 merchants, 8, 11, 36, 199, 203, 216, 219, 233 n.13
 Michiel, Maffio, 188
 micro-history, 7–8
 Middleton, Thomas, 56, 60, 63, 66, 68 n.14, 72 n.54, 201, 220
 The Roaring Girl, 220, 225, 229–30, 235 n.38
 “Sherley His Entertainment,” 54, 63, 68 n.14, 70 n.35, 71 n.44, 72 n.60
 The Triumphs of Truth, 148
 Milward, Peter, 178, 193 n.18
 Mir Husayn, 64
 Modena, 176, 192 n.5
 Moluccas (Spice Islands), 216
 Mongol, Mongolian, 56, 68 n.19, 76, 79, 90 n.22, 99, 104
 Montalto, Cardinal, 178
 Moors, 4–5, 13 n.6, 15 n.22, 16 n.25, 49 n.2, 51 n.26, 53, 91 n.29, 193 n.24
 and conquest of Spain, 8, 42–8
 in English literature, 23, 26–8, 36–9, 68 n.15, 199, 211 n.15
 Western views of, 25, 35–6
 see also Africa, Africans; Morocco, Moroccans
 Moriscos, 45
 Morocco, Moroccans, 5–6, 16 n.25, 43, 53, 81, 92 n.49
 see also Moors
 Mortus Ali, *see* ‘Ali
 Mughal, 3, 5, 8, 11, 16 n.24, n.26, 53, 71 n.46, 97–111, 113–17, 117 n.3, 118 n.6, n.11–12, 120 n.40, 180, 216, 237 n.51
 Mughal empire, 97–9, 101, 104, 107, 109, 114, 117
 Muhammad, Prophet, 9, 21, 23–7, 29, 39–41, 47, 57–8, 65

- Muharram, 70 n.37
 Muir, Kenneth, 19 n.44, 176, 192 n.5
 Munday, Anthony, 68 n.10
 Zelauto, 68 n.10
 Mundy, Peter, 9, 123–35, 136–7
 n.6–14, 137–8 n.16–20
 “*Itinerarium Mundii*,” 124, 128
 revision of “*Relation I*,” 124, 133
 Murad I, Ottoman sultan, 147, 157
 n.21, 161–70, 174
 Murad III, Ottoman sultan, 140, 147
 Murshid al-Dula’ ‘Abdullah, 69 n.28
 Musa al-Kazim, 65
 Muscovy, Muscovite, 79, 81, 92 n.40
 Muscovy Company, 54
 Muslim(s), 14 n.8–9, 18 n.34, n.41,
 43–5, 53–4, 68 n.13, 69 n.21, 70
 n.36, 71 n.50, 97, 101–2, 105–6,
 189, 236 n.50
 in English literature, 3–8, 10, 16
 n.26, 22–3, 57, 59–60, 76, 78,
 116, 141–2, 145, 149, 151–3, 174,
 179–80
 Western views of, 35–6, 38–40, 48,
 48 n.1, 63, 200–1
 see also Islam
 mute, 179
 see also eunuch
 Muzaffarid, 68 n.19

 Native American, 74, 78–9, 86, 88
 n.3
 Necipoğlu, Gülru, 137 n.17
 Negro, 36, 82, 201, 212 n.12
 New Exchange, 202–5, 213 n.29, 219
 New Testament, 176
 Newton, Thomas, 35, 48 n.1
 Nine Worthies, 150, 157 n.30
 Nixon, Anthony, 194 n.35
 The Three English Brothers, 8, 194
 n.35
 see also Sherley (Shirley) brothers
 Noor Jahan, 98, 102–3, 106, 109–16,
 120 n.44
 Nowruz, 60–1
nūbūwwat, 68 n.11

 orientalism, 5–6, 11, 91 n.29, 179
 orientalist(s), 7, 54–5, 60, 77, 219, 231
 Origen, 25
 Orlin, Lena Cowen, 6, 17 n.29
 Ormerod, Henry Arderne, 196 n.51
 Orsino, Don Virginio, duke of
 Bracciano, 177–9, 183–6, 188–91
 other, othering, otherness, 5–6, 11,
 22–3, 47, 54, 60, 63, 66, 77, 84,
 86, 120 n.41, 134, 159, 170, 171
 n.13, 177–8, 181, 191, 231
 Ottoman empire, 7, 13 n.6, 15 n.21, 17
 n.27, 53, 88 n.9–10, 89 n.13, 94
 n.71, 118 n.6, 140, 174–5, 182,
 198–9, 208 n.1, 234 n.14
 and English drama, 54, 66, 147, 155,
 164, 177–8, 179–80
 in travel books, 124–5, 128–34, 135
 n.2, 196 n.26
 see also Turk(s)
 Ovid, 21, 30 n.2

 Pagden, Anthony, 1–2, 5–6, 11 n.1–2,
 12 n.4
 Parker, Patricia, 90 n.17, 92 n.44,
 176–7, 182, 192 n.10, 193
 n.12–14, 194 n.33
 Parry, William, 194 n.35
 *A New and Large Discourse of the
 Travels of Sir Anthony Sherley*, 194
 n.35
 see also Sherley (Shirley) brothers
 Parthia, 228
 Peele, George, 36, 49 n.5, 162, 201
 *The Turkish Mahomet and Hiren the
 Fair Greek*, 162
 Penryn, Cornwall, 125, 132, 134–5
 Persepolis, 56
 Persia, Persians, 8, 68 n.19, 69 n.21,
 70 n.31, 71 n.47, n.51, 88 n.4, 90
 n.18, n.22, 107, 109, 117, 120 n.59,
 194 n.35, 219, 228, 234 n.19
 in English literature, 53, 55–67,
 73–4, 76, 78, 84–5, 145, 150, 181,
 184
 religious practices of, 60–3, 65–6
 Petrarch, Petrarchanism, 77, 82, 92
 n.32, 169
 Philip III, king of Spain, 69 n.21
 Pindar, Sir Paul, 126, 136 n.11, 137
 n.16
 piracy, 15 n.24, 49 n.6, 106, 186–90,
 195 n.44–5, 196 n.51, 209 n.3

- pirate(s), 7, 10, 16 n.26, 49 n.6, 92
 n.46, 186–91, 194 n.27, 195 n.45,
 204, 211 n.15
pir-muridi, 65
 Pius VI, Pope, 140
 Pliny, 194 n.28, 212 n.21
 poison, 7, 32 n.27, 40, 198, 204, 207
Politic of the Turkish Empire, The, 206,
 214 n.41
 Polybius, 189
 Pomeranz, Kenneth, 195 n.39
 Potter, Lois, 189, 195 n.50
 Prague, 178
 Preston, Thomas, 56
 Cambyes, King of Persia, 56
 Protestantism, 22, 29, 31 n.24, 87 n.1,
 142, 178
 Purchas, Samuel, 118 n.7, 125, 131–2,
 136 n.4, 138 n.20, 213 n.35, 234
 n.19
 Puritan(s), 142, 149, 173, 221, 227,
 230

qibla, 61
qīyyāmat, 68 n.11
Qur'an, 54, 71 n.50, 182, 194 n.32

 race, 4, 35–8, 45–6, 50 n.10, 89 n.14,
 n.17, 101, 103–5, 113
 biblical traditions about, 36–8, 40–1
 in English literature, 7, 15 n.22,
 22–3, 26, 74–5, 76–7, 80, 86, 87
 n.1, 88 n.8, 94 n.68, 121 n.79,
 209 n.7
 and religion, 50 n.20, 88 n.11
 see also black, blackness
 Raleigh (Raleigh), Sir Walter, 49 n.3,
 135 n.2, 188
 The Life and Death of Muhammad,
 50 n.19
 Ramses II, Pharaoh, 216, 229
 Randolph, Thomas, 210 n.11
 Rawlins, John, 36, 49 n.6
 Relihan, Constance, 176, 192 n.7, 257
 renegade, renegado, 7, 14 n.11, 17 n.29,
 51 n.23, 58, 173, 178–80, 182–4,
 189–91, 194 n.27, 203–4, 206
 repertory, of Elizabethan theaters, 9–10,
 139, 150, 155 n.1, 252
 Rhodes, 174

 Rice, Warner Grenelle, 3–4, 14 n.11,
 n.15
 Riche, Barnabe, 176, 192 n.5
 “Apolonius and Silla,” 176
 Richmond, Velma Bourgeois, 146, 156
 n.10–11, n.18, 157 n.29
 Riggs, David, 202, 212 n.24, 213 n.25,
 n.28
 Ringrose, Kathryn M., 193 n.22
Rivayat, 61, 70 n.38
 Robert, duke of Normandy, 150, 152–3
 Robinson, Benedict, 13 n.6, 67–8 n.10,
 77, 91 n.31, 141, 156 n.9
 Roman Catholicism, *see* Catholicism
 romance, 23, 41, 58, 87 n.1, 88 n.5, 90
 n.18, 91 n.31, 92 n.42, 93 n.54,
 163, 175–7, 187, 195 n.42
 Islamic elements in, 13 n.6, 58, 67
 n.10, 73–87, 140–3, 155, 156 n.9,
 175, 211 n.11
 and race, 9, 38, 45, 51 n.24, 73–87
 Root, Deborah, 45, 51 n.25
 Rowlie, Samson, 180–1, 183
 Royal Exchange, 202–3, 219
 Rubiś, Joan-Paul, 79, 92 n.36
 Rudolph, Holy Roman emperor, 178
 Russia, Russians, 15 n.24, 78–9, 92
 n.40, n.49, 103, 118 n.5, 201

 Safavid(s), *see* Persia
 Safi Mirza, 64
safir, 185
 Said, Edward W., 1–2, 5–7, 11, 11 n.1,
 12 n.3–4, 13 n.5, 14 n.8, 15 n.23,
 17 n.27, 67 n.8, 179, 258
Orientalism, 1–2, 5, 11 n.1, 12–13
 n.4–5, 14 n.8, 16 n.25, 17 n.26,
 19 n.45, 67 n.8, 68 n.15, 88 n.4,
 91 n.29, 118 n.5, n.9, 119 n.38,
 120 n.42, n.58, 171 n.13, 179, 193
 n.24
 sailors, 188–9, 233 n.11
salat, 68 n.11
 Sandys, George, 125, 131–2, 134, 138
 n.19–20, 181, 194 n.29
 Saracen(s), 10, 14 n.8, 35, 48 n.1, 57,
 67–8 n.10, 143, 146, 177, 220
 Sarracoll, John, 135 n.4
 Sassanian dynasty, 65
 see also Persia

- Satan, 23, 28, 188
 Scanderbeg, 199, 210–11 n.11
 Scotland, 152, 187, 214 n.45
 Scottish, 80, 93 n.49–50, 195 n.43
 Scythia, Scythians, 56, 59, 104, 145, 212 n.21
 selfhood, 11, 170, 174
 Selim I, Ottoman sultan, 101, 111
 Senior, C. M., 195 n.45, n.47
 Shahani, Gitanjali, 195 n.39, 215, 232 n.2–3, 233 n.5
 Shahr-Banu, 65, 111, 114
 Shakespeare, William, 6, 9, 15 n.22, 18 n.33–4, 21–5, 29–30, 30 n.6, n.13, 31–2 n.24–5, 50 n.20, 67 n.1, 82, 91 n.26, n.28, 93 n.54, 94 n.68, 104, 119 n.37, 142, 147, 154, 155 n.2, 156 n.8–9, 157 n.21, 158 n.38, n.46–7, 160–1, 170 n.2, 173–4, 176–8, 184, 189, 191 n.1, 192 n.5–6, n.9, 193 n.16, n.18, 195 n.50, 198, 201, 210 n.8, 232 n.1
As You Like It, 4
Hamlet, 26, 161
 2 *Henry IV*, 147, 157 n.22, 174
Henry V, 142, 153–4, 158 n.44, 180
Macbeth, 4
Othello, 4, 6, 9, 15 n.22, 17–18 n.32, 18 n.34, 21–30, 30 n.1, n.6, n.8, 30–1 n.13, 32 n.25, n.30, n.33, 33 n.36, 49 n.2, 50 n.11, 85, 91 n.26–8, 94 n.66, n.68, 104–5, 139, 160–1, 164–5, 168, 171 n.9, 174–5, 178, 209 n.3, n.6
Timon of Athens, 4
Titus Andronicus, 25, 160
Troilus and Cressida, 162
Twelfth Night, 7, 173–5, 177–8, 180, 182–3, 186–7, 189, 191, 191–2 n.1–2, 192 n.7, n.11, 193 n.15, n.23, 194 n.29, 228
 Sherley (Shirley) brothers, 55, 184
 Anthony, 59, 63, 66, 69 n.21, 184–5
Sir Anthony Sherley His Relation of His Travels into Persia, 194 n.35
 Robert, 54, 60, 63–4, 70 n.35, 71 n.44, 72 n.54, n.60
True Report of Sir Anthony Shierlies Journey, 195 n.37
see also Middleton, Thomas
- Shi'a, Shi'i, Shiite, 3, 8, 53–4, 57–9, 61–2, 64–6, 69 n.21, n.26, n.28, 70 n.31, n.36, 72 n.53, n.56, n.58
 Sidney family, 74, 91 n.30, 138
 Mary (Wroth), 79, 87 n.2, 88 n.4, 90 n.18, 91 n.26, 92 n.32–3, 93 n.54, 94 n.70
 Philip, uncle of Mary Wroth, 77, 89 n.16, 116, 141
 Robert, brother of Mary Wroth, 138 n.20
 silk, 10, 149, 216, 219–21, 227, 231, 233 n.7–8, 233–4 n.13–14, 234 n.19, 235 n.36, 235–6 n.39, 236 n.41
 as metaphor, 221, 224–7
 and social status, 10, 219–26, 228, 230–2
 Silk Road, 13 n.6, 219
 Skiliter, S. A., 194 n.25
 slave, slavery, 15 n.24, 37, 49 n.6, 71 n.50, 75, 86, 88 n.12, 99, 101–2, 105, 110, 119 n.35, 146, 163–4, 189
 Smith, Bruce, 177, 192 n.11, 194 n.29
 Smith, Byron Porter, 4, 14 n.18
 sonnet, 25, 77, 80, 82–3, 92 n.32, 93 n.54
 Sophy (Persian shah), 58–9, 63, 65–6, 70 n.33, 84–5, 142, 150, 152, 181, 184, 201
 Southern, Richard William, 4, 15 n.21–2
 Spain, 8, 11 n.2, 35–6, 38–40, 42–7, 50 n.19, 51 n.25–6, 140, 152, 184
 Spenser, Edmund, 151, 157 n.36, 211 n.11
 Spice Islands, *see* Moluccas
 spice(s), 10–11, 216, 219–20, 227–8, 230–1, 233 n.11, 234 n.19, 236 n.50, 237 n.52
 as metaphor, 229–32
 as props, 227–8, 233 n.7
 spice trade, 14 n.9, 231
 Stade, 66
 Stallybrass, Peter, 6, 17 n.29, 219, 232, 233 n.13, 234 n.15, n.20, 235 n.28, n.39, 236 n.39–40, 237 n.53
 Stanivukovic, Goran, 18 n.35, 176, 186, 192 n.9, 195 n.41

- stereotype(s), 4, 6, 9, 23, 29, 36, 55, 66,
 79, 83, 117, 160–1, 163, 167
 Stoicism, 10, 163–9
 Strand, The, 202–5
 Sublime Porte, 204, 213 n.36
 Sufi, 3, 58–9, 65
 sultan, 10, 14 n.14, 22, 48 n.2, 56, 68
 n.16, 78, 114, 130, 142, 145–9,
 163, 166–7, 171 n.13, n.16, 181–2,
 192 n.3, 199, 201, 203–4, 207, 213
 n.35, n.38, 219, 235 n.29
 see also under names of individual
 sultans
 Sunni, Sunnite, 3, 54, 58–9, 64, 66–7
 Suranyi, Anna, 123, 135 n.2
 Swinburne, Algernon, 141, 156 n.8

 Tatar, *see* Tartar(s)
 Tartaria, Tartarian, 9, 38, 48 n.1, 76–8,
 81, 83–6, 88 n.4, 89 n.16, 90 n.18,
 n.22, 91 n.30, 92 n.38, n.40, 94
 n.73, 119 n.38
 Tartar(s), 9, 19 n.44, 41, 73–9, 83–6,
 87 n.1, 89 n.15, 90 n.22, 91 n.24,
 n.30, 104–5, 119 n.39
 Taubman, Matthew, 47–8, 51 n.26
tawhīd, 68 n.11
 Temple, Sir Richard Carnac, 126, 136
 n.6, n.9, 137 n.13
 Tenenti, Alberto, 195 n.44, n.46
 Theobald, Lewis, 195 n.50
 Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 29, 32 n.34
 Summa Theologiae, 29, 32 n.34, 239
 Tiepolo, Almorò, 187
 Timurid empire, 58–9, 90 n.22, 117
 Timur Lenk (Tamerlane), 56–8, 68
 n.19, 69 n.29, 104
 Tonkin, Thomas, 137 n.13
 Tougher, Shaun F., 193 n.22
 Towerson, Gabriel, 8, 97–8, 113–16
 trade, 3, 6, 10, 14 n.9, 18 n.37, 54, 75,
 86, 88–9 n.12–13, 97–9, 106, 115,
 118 n.12, 121 n.79, 140, 188, 194
 n.25, 202, 205, 208, 210 n.9, 211
 n.15, 214 n.45, 215–16, 219, 221,
 230–1, 232 n.2, 233 n.8, 236 n.50
 traffick, *see* trade
Tragical History, Admirable
 Achievements and Various Events
 of Guy of Warwick, The, 9–10, 139–43,
 145–51, 155, 155 n.2, 156 n.16
 trans-Atlantic, 75, 86, 88 n.12, 91 n.29
 transculturation, 18 n.38
 translation, 3, 7–8, 15 n.21, 39, 42,
 47–8, 51 n.26, 63, 69 n.30, 87 n.1,
 132, 151, 212 n.21, 231
 travel, 3–4, 7, 9, 14 n.11, 15 n.20, 16
 n.24, 17 n.27, 18 n.39, 38, 50 n.15,
 55, 60–1, 66, 67 n.4, 68 n.15, 84,
 99–100, 105, 107–10, 112, 121
 n.71, 123–35, 135 n.2, 136 n.4,
 137 n.12, 145, 181, 184, 186–8,
 198, 200–1, 205–7, 211 n.20, 214
 n.45, 216, 237 n.52
 travel books, 9, 123–35, 137 n.18
 travelogues, *see* travel books
 Turcoman, 58
 Turk(s), Turkish, 14 n.11, 16 n.25, 22,
 67 n.2, n.10, 89 n.13, 90 n.22, 97,
 99, 103, 106, 117, 137 n.15, 171
 n.6, 187–8, 194 n.25, n.28, 211
 n.7, 213 n.36
 in English dramatic works, 3–7, 10,
 14 n.14, 15 n.19, n.24, 17 n.30,
 30 n.6, 51 n.23, 53–9, 61–7, 68
 n.15, 105, 119 n.35, 139–42,
 145–8, 151–3, 155, 155 n.1, 156
 n.4, 159–64, 166–70, 170 n.4,
 173–4, 177–81, 192 n.3, 197,
 199–201, 203–8, 213 n.38
 in non-dramatic works, 49 n.6, 125,
 128, 130–2, 136 n.7, 138 n.19, 171
 n.6, n.13, 200–1, 206–7, 211 n.16
 as synonym for Muslim(s), 5, 53–7
 Western views of, 13 n.6, 15 n.21,
 35–6, 38–9, 41, 48–9 n.1–2
 see also Ottoman empire
 turkey-cock, 180, 194 n.28
 Turner, Jack, 216, 231, 233 n.9, n.11,
 236 n.42, 237 n.52
 turning Turk, 10, 15 n.24, 17 n.28, 30
 n.6–7, 69 n.24, 155 n.1, 159, 170
 n.1, 171 n.7, 180, 182–3, 191, 192
 n.3, 195 n.50, 197–8, 205–8, 209
 n.3, n.7
 see also conversion
 Uluç Hassan, 180
 Uruch Beg, *see* Don Juan of Persia

- Usancasan, king of Persia, 59
 uskoks, *see* pirate(s); Illyria
usūl al-din, 68 n.11

 Va'iz Kashifi, 69 n.28
 Valladolid, 69 n.21
 Varro, 194 n.28
 Venice, 21, 24, 176, 187–8, 195 n.44,
 198, 219
 Vestiarian controversy, 149
Vilāyat, 58, 69 n.26
 violence, 23, 25, 43, 79, 164, 167, 169,
 174, 186, 199, 207, 209 n.3, 231
 Vitkus, Daniel, 15 n.24, 17 n.28, 22–3,
 28, 30 n.6, 32 n.30, 49 n.6, 57–8,
 67 n.1, 68 n.14, n.18, 155 n.1, 156
 n.5, 157 n.26, 159, 165, 170 n.1,
 171 n.7, 183, 189, 192 n.3, 194
 n.34, 195 n.49, 198, 209 n.3, 211
 n.13, 212 n.20, 234 n.14
 Voltaire (François Marie Arouet), 231

 Wann, Louis, 3, 14 n.11, n.13

 Ward, John, 204
 Webster, John, 178
 The White Devil, 178
 white, whiteness, 9, 23, 25, 26–8, 31
 n.23–4, 37, 74–80, 82–3, 91 n.23,
 101–5, 119 n.35, 152
 Wroth, Mary, 9, 19 n.44, 73, 75, 81, 87
 n.1, 88 n.4, n.7, 89 n.16, 90 n.19,
 91 n.30, 92 n.33, 93 n.54, 94 n.67,
 119 n.38, 175
 The Countess of Montgomery's Urania,
 17 n.26, 73–87, 87 n.1, 88 n.4, 91
 n.30, 119 n.38
 “Pamphilia to Amphilanthus,” 82, 93
 n.54, 251
 see also Sidney family

 Yazdagird, 65
 Young, Robert, 74, 88 n.8

 Zoroastrianism, 8, 59–63, 70 n.36,
 n.38, 71 n.41–2, n.46
 Khordah-Avesta, 62, 71 n.39